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Ballads, Poems, and Lyrics.

BALLADS, POEMS, AND LYRICS,

Original and Translated.

BY

DENIS FLORENCE M'CARTHY.

PUES PARA CANTAR NACI,
HE DE CANTAR, VIVE DIOS!
CALDERON.

DUBLIN:
JAMES McGLASHAN, 21 D'OLIER-STREET.
1850.

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DUBLIN:
Printed at the University Press,
BY M. H. GILL.

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Dedication.

ETHNA, TO CULL SWEET FLOWERS DIVINELY FAIR,
TO SEEK FOR GEMS OF SUCH TRANSPARENT LIGHT
AS WOULD NOT BE UNWORTHY TO UNITE
ROUND THY FAIR BROW, AND THROUGH THY DARK BROWN HAIR,
I WOULD THAT I HAD WINGS TO CLEAVE THE AIR,
IN SEARCH OF SOME FAR REGION OF DELIGHT,
THAT BACK TO THEE FROM THAT ADVENTUROUS FLIGHT,
A GLORIOUS WREATH MY HAPPY HANDS MIGHT BEAR;
SOON WOULD THE SWEETEST PERSIAN ROSE BE THINE—
SOON WOULD THE GLORY OF GOLCONDA'S MINE
FLASH ON THY FOREHEAD, LIKE A STAR—AH! ME,
IN PLACE OF THESE, I BRING, WITH TREMBLING HAND,
THESE FADING WILD FLOWERS FROM OUR NATIVE LAND—
THESE SIMPLE PEBBLES FROM THE IRISH SEA!

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The Bell-Founder.

THE BELL-FOUNDER.

PART I.

Labour and Hope.

Arbeit ist des Bürgers Zierde,
Segen ist der Mühe Preis;
Ehrt den König seine Würde,
Ehret uns der Hände Fleiss.

SCHILLER.

TOIL IS POLISHED MAN'S VOCATION;
PRAISES ARE THE MEED OF SKILL;
KINGS MAY VAUNT THEIR CROWN AND STATION,
WE WILL VAUNT OUR LABOUR STILL.

MANGAN.

I.

O ERIN! thou desolate mother, the heart in thy bosom is sore,
And wringing thy hands in despair, thou dost roam round the plague-stricken shore;
Thy children are dying or flying, thy great ones are laid in the dust,
And those who survive are divided, and those who control are unjust.

Wilt thou blame me, dear mother, if, turning my eyes from such horrors away,
I look, through the night of our wretchedness, back to some bright vanished day,
When, though sorrow, which ever is with us, was heavy and dark on the land,
Hope twinkled and shone like a planet, and Faith like a sword in the hand?

II.

Oft has poverty gnawed at thy bosom, and furrowed thy matronly brow,
But a famine of wisdom and courage thou never hast known until now;
No blight like to this ever came, though the Spring-tide and Summer were cold,
For the hands of thy young men are empty, and barren the heads of the old.
No fruit from the past has been gathered, no seeds for the future are sown,
But like children or idiots we live on the crumbs of the present alone.
Then, mournfullest mother, forgive me, if it be—as it may be—a crime
To fly from the ruin around me, and dream of a happier time.

III.

Not now rings the song like a bugle 'mid the clashing and splintering of spears,
Or the heart-piercing keen of the mourner o'er the graves of green Erin of tears;

Not to strengthen the young arm of freedom, nor to melt off old slavery's chain,
But to flow through the soul in its calmness, like a stream o'er the breast of a plain.
Changing, though calm be its current, from its source to its haven of rest,
Flowing on through fair Italy's vineyards to the emerald fields of the west—
A picture of life and its pleasures, its troubles, its cradle and shroud,
Now bright with the glow of the sunshine, now dark with the gloom of the cloud.

IV.

In that land where the heaven-tinted pencil giveth shape to the splendour of dreams,
Near Florence, the fairest of cities, and Arno, the sweetest of streams,
'Neath those hills[1] whence the race of the Geraldine wandered in ages long since,
For ever to rule over Desmond and Erin as martyr and prince,
Lived Paolo, the young Campanaro[2], the pride of his own little vale—
Hope changed the hot breath of his furnace as into a sea-wafted gale;
Peace, the child of Employment, was with him, with prattle so soothing and sweet,
And Love, while revealing the future, strewed the sweet roses under his feet.

V.

Ah! little they know of true happiness, they whom satiety fills,
Who, flung on the rich breast of luxury, eat of the rankness that kills.
Ah! little they know of the blessedness toil-purchased slumber enjoys,
Who, stretched on the hard rack of indolence, taste of the sleep that destroys;
Nothing to hope for, or labour for; nothing to sigh for, or gain;
Nothing to light in its vividness, lightning-like, bosom and brain;
Nothing to break life's monotony, rippling it o'er with its breath:
Nothing but dulness and lethargy, weariness, sorrow, and death!

VI.

But blessed that child of humanity, happiest man among men,
Who, with hammer, or chisel, or pencil, with rudder, or ploughshare, or pen,
Laboureth ever and ever with hope through the morning of life,
Winning home and its darling divinities—love-worshipped children and wife.
Round swings the hammer of industry, quickly the sharp chisel rings,
And the heart of the toiler has throbbings that stir not the bosom of kings—

He the true ruler and conqueror, he the true king of his race
Who nerveth his arm for life's combat, and looks the strong world in the face.

VII.

And such was young Paolo! The morning—ere yet the faint starlight had gone—
To the loud-ringing workshop beheld him move joyfully light-footed on.
In the glare and the roar of the furnace he toiled till the evening-star burned,
And then back again through that valley, as glad but more weary returned.
One moment at morning he lingers by that cottage that stands by the stream,
Many moments at evening he tarries by that casement that woos the moon's beam;
For the light of his life and his labours, like a lamp from that casement, shines
In the heart-lighted face that looks out from that purple-clad trellis of vines.

VIII.

Francesca! sweet, innocent maiden! 'tis not that thy young cheek is fair,
Or thy sun-lighted eyes glance like stars through the curls of thy windwoven hair;
'Tis not for thy rich lips of coral, or even thy white breast of snow,
That my song shall recall thee, Francesca! but more for the good heart below.

Goodness is beauty's best portion, a dower that no time can reduce,
A wand of enchantment and happiness, brightening and strengthening with use.
One the long-sigh'd-for nectar that earthliness bitterly tinctures and taints:
One the fading mirage of the fancy, and one the elysium it paints.

IX.

Long ago, when thy father would kiss thee, the tears in his old eyes would start,
For thy face—like a dream of his boyhood—renewed the fresh youth of his heart.
He is gone; but thy mother remaineth, and kneeleth each night-time and morn,
And blesses the Mother of Blessings for the hour her Francesca was born.
There are proud stately dwellings in Florence, and mothers and maidens are there,
And bright eyes as bright as Francesca's, and fair cheeks as brilliantly fair,
And hearts, too, as warm and as innocent, there where the rich paintings gleam,
But what proud mother blesses her daughter like the mother by Arno's sweet stream?

X.

It was not alone, when that mother grew aged and feeble to hear,
That thy voice like the whisper of angels still fell on the old woman's ear,

Or even that thy face, when the darkness of time overshadowed her sight,
Shone calm through the blank of her mind, like the moon in the midst of the night.
But thine was the duty, Francesca, and the love-lightened labour was thine,
To treasure the white-curling wool, and the warm-flowing milk of the kine,
And the fruits, and the clusters of purple, and the flock's tender yearly increase,
That *she* might have rest in life's evening, and go to her fathers in peace.

XI.

Francesca and Paolo are plighted, and they wait but a few happy days,
Ere they walk forth together in trustfulness out on Life's wonderful ways;
Ere, clasping the hands of each other, they move through the stillness and noise,
Dividing the cares of existence, but doubling its hopes and its joys.
Sweet days of betrothment, which brighten so slowly to love's burning noon,
Like the days of the Spring which grow longer, the nearer the fulness of June,
Though ye move to the Noon and the Summer of Love with a slow-moving wing,
Ye are lit with the light of the Morning, and decked with the blossoms of Spring.

XII.

The days of betrothment are over, for now when the evening star shines,
Two faces look joyfully out from that purple-clad trellis of vines;
The light-hearted laughter is doubled, two voices steal forth on the air,
And blend in the light notes of song, or the sweet solemn cadence of prayer.
At morning when Paolo departeth, 'tis out of that sweet cottage door,
At evening he comes to that casement, but passes that casement no more;
And the old feeble mother at night-time, when saying, "The Lord's will be done,"
While blessing the name of a daughter, now blendeth the name of a son.

PART II.

Triumph and Reward.

FUNERA PLANGO,
FULMINA FRANGO,
SABBATA PANGO,
EXCITO LENTOS,
DISSIPO VENTOS,
PACO CRUENTOS.

I.

In the furnace the dry branches crackle, the crucible shines as with gold,
As they carry the hot flaming metal in haste from the fire to the mould;
Loud roar the bellows, and louder the flames as they shrieking escape,
And loud is the song of the workmen who watch o'er the fast-filling shape;
To and fro in the red-glaring chamber the proud Master anxiously moves,
And the quick and the skilful he praiseth, and the dull and the laggard reproves;
And the heart in his bosom expandeth, as the thick bubbling metal up swells,
For like to the birth of his children he watcheth the birth of the bells.

II.

Peace had guarded the door of young Paolo, success on his industry smiled,
And the dark wing of Time had passed quicker than grief from the face of a child;
Broader lands lay around that sweet cottage, younger footsteps tripped lightly around,
And the sweet silent stillness was broken by the hum of a still sweeter sound.
At evening when homeward returning how many dear hands must he press,
Where of old at that vine-covered wicket he lingered but one to caress;
And *that* dearest one is still with him, to counsel, to strengthen, and calm,
And to pour over Life's needful wounds the healing of Love's blessed balm.

III.

But age will come on with its winter, though happiness hideth its snows;
And if youth has its duty of labour, the birth-right of age is repose:
And thus from that love-sweetened toil, which the Heavens had so prospered and blest,
The old Campanaro will go to that vine-covered cottage to rest;
But Paolo is pious and grateful, and vows as he kneels at her shrine,
To offer some fruit of his labour to Mary the Mother benign—

Eight silver-toned bells will he offer, to toll for the quick and the dead,
From the tower of the church of her convent that stands on the cliff overhead.

IV.

'Tis for this that the bellows are blowing, that the workmen their sledge-hammers wield,
That the firm sandy moulds are now broken, and the dark-shining bells are revealed;
The cars with their streamers are ready, and the flower-harnessed necks of the steers,
And the bells from the cold silent workshop are borne amid blessings and tears.
By the white-blossom'd, sweet-scented myrtles, by the olive-trees fringing the plain,
By the corn-fields and vineyards is winding that gift-bearing, festival train;
And the hum of their voices is blending with the music that streams on the gale,
As they wend to the Church of our Lady that stands at the head of the vale.

V.

Now they enter, and now more divinely the Saints' painted effigies smile,
Now the Acolytes bearing lit tapers move solemnly down through the aisle,
Now the Thurifer swings the rich censer, and the white-curling vapour up-floats,
And hangs round the deep-pealing organ, and blends with the tremulous notes.

In a white shining alb comes the Abbot, and he circles the bells round about,
And with oil, and with salt, and with water, they are purified inside and out;
They are marked with Christ's mystical symbol, while the priests and the choristers sing,
And are bless'd in the name of that God to whose honour they ever shall ring.

VI.

Toll, toll! with a rapid vibration, with a melody silv'ry and strong,
The Bells from the sound-shaken belfry are singing their first maiden song;
Not now for the dead or the living, or the triumphs of peace or of strife,
But a quick joyous outburst of jubilee full of their newly felt life;
Rapid, more rapid, the clapper rebounds from the round of the bells—
Far and more far through the valley the intertwined melody swells—
Quivering and broken the atmosphere trembles and twinkles around,
Like the eyes and the hearts of the hearers that glisten and beat to the sound.

VII.

But how to express all his rapture when echo the deep cadence bore
To the old Campanaro reclining in the shade of his vine-covered door,

How to tell of the bliss that came o'er him as he gazed on the fair evening star,
And heard the faint toll of the vesper bell steal o'er the vale from afar—
Ah! it was not alone the brief ecstacy music doth ever impart
When Sorrow and Joy at its bidding come together, and dwell in the heart;
But it was that delicious sensation with which the young Mother is blest,
As she lists to the laugh of her child as it falleth asleep on her breast.

VIII.

From a sweet night of slumber he woke; but it was not that morn had unroll'd
O'er the pale, cloudy tents of the Orient, her banners of purple and gold:
It was not the song of the sky-lark, that rose from the green pastures near,
But the sound of his bells that fell softly, as dew on the slumberer's ear.
At that sound he awoke and arose, and went forth on the bead-bearing grass—
At that sound, with his loving Francesca, he piously knelt at the Mass.
If the sun shone in splendour around him, and that certain music were dumb,
He would deem it a dream of the night-time, and doubt if the morning had come.

IX.

At noon, as he lay in the sultriness, under his broad-leafy limes,
Far sweeter than murmuring waters came the toll of the Angelus chimes.
Pious and tranquil he rose, and uncovered his reverend head,
And thrice was the Ave-Maria and thrice was the Angelus said,
Sweet custom the South still retaineth, to turn for a moment away
From the pleasures and pains of existence, from the trouble and turmoil of day,
From the tumult within and without, to the peace that abideth on high,
When the deep, solemn sound from the belfry comes down like a voice from the sky.

X.

And thus round the heart of the old man, at morning, at noon, and at eve,
The bells, with their rich woof of music, the net-work of happiness weave.
They ring in the clear, tranquil evening, and lo! all the air is alive,
As the sweet-laden thoughts come, like bees, to abide in his heart as a hive.
They blend with his moments of joy, as the odour doth blend with the flower,—
They blend with his light-falling tears, as the sunshine doth blend with the shower.

As their music is mirthful or mournful, his pulse beateth sluggish or fast,
And his breast takes its hue, like the ocean, as the sunshine or shadows are cast.

XI.

Thus adding new zest to enjoyment, and drawing the sharp sting from pain,
The heart of the old man grew young, as it drank the sweet musical strain.
Again at the altar he stands, with Francesca the fair at his side,
As the bells ring a quick peal of gladness, to welcome some happy young bride.
'Tis true, when the death-bells are tolling, the wounds of his heart bleed anew,
When he thinks of his old loving mother, and the darlings that destiny slew;
But the tower in whose shade they are sleeping seems the emblem of hope and of love,—
There is silence and death at its base, but there's life in the belfry above.

XII.

Was it the sound of his bells, as they swung in the purified air,
That drove from the bosom of Paolo the dark-wingéd demons of care?
Was it their magical tone that for many a shadowless day
(So faith once believed) swept the clouds and the black-boding tempests away?

Ah! never may Fate with their music a harsh-grating dissonance blend!
Sure an evening so calm and so bright will glide peacefully on to the end.
Sure the course of his life, to its close, like his own native river must be,
Flowing on through the valley of flowers to its home in the bright summer sea!

PART III.

Vicissitude and Rest.

THE FLOWER THAT SMILES TO-DAY,
TO-MORROW DIES;
ALL THAT WE WISH TO STAY,
TEMPTS AND THEN FLIES.
WHAT IS THIS WORLD'S DELIGHT?
LIGHTNING THAT MOCKS THE NIGHT—
BRIEF EVEN AS BRIGHT.

SHELLEY.

——— TILL THERE CAME UPON HIS MIND
A SENSE OF LONELINESS, A THIRST WITH WHICH HE PINED.

REVOLT OF ISLAM.

THE BELLS RUNG BLITHELY FROM ST. MARY'S TOWER.

TALE OF PARAGUAY.

I.

O ERIN! thou broad-spreading valley—thou well-watered land of fresh streams,
When I gaze on thy hills greenly sloping, where the light of such loveliness beams,
When I rest by the rim of thy fountains, or stray where thy streams disembogue,
Then I think that the Fairies have brought me to dwell in the bright Tir-na-n-oge[3].
But when on the face of thy children I look, and behold the big tears
Still stream down their grief-eaten channels, which widen and deepen with years,

I fear that some dark blight for ever will fall on thy harvests of peace,
And that, like to thy lakes and thy rivers, thy sorrows must ever increase[4].

II.

O Land! which the heavens made for joy, but where wretchedness buildeth its throne—
O prodigal spendthrift of sorrow! and hast thou not heirs of thine own?
Thus to lavish thy sons' only portion, and bring one said claimant the more,
From the sweet sunny land of the south, to thy crowded and sorrowful shore?
For this proud bark that cleaveth thy waters, she is not a currach of thine,
And the broad purple sails that spread o'er her seem dyed in the juice of the vine.
Not thine is that flag, backward floating, nor the olive-cheek'd seamen who guide,
Nor that heart-broken old man who gazes so listlessly over the tide.

III.

Accurs'd be the monster, who selfishly draweth his sword from its sheath;
Let his garland be twined by the Furies, and the upas tree furnish the wreath;
Let the blood he has shed steam around him, through the length of eternity's years,
And the anguish-wrung screams of his victims for ever resound in his ears.

For all that makes life worth possessing must yield to his self-seeking lust:
He trampleth on home and on love, as his war-horses trample the dust;
He loosens the red streams of ruin, which wildly, though partially, stray—
They but chafe round the rock-bastion'd castle, while they sweep the frail cottage away.

IV.

Feuds fell like a plague upon Florence, and rage from without and within;
Peace turned her mild eyes from the havoc, and Mercy grew deaf in the din;
Fear strengthened the dove-wings of Happiness, tremblingly borne on the gale;
And the angel Security vanished, as the War-demon swept o'er the vale.
Is it for the Mass or the Angelus now that the bells ever ring?
Or is it the red trickling must such a purple reflection doth fling?
Ah, no: 'tis the tocsin of terror that tolls from the desolate shrine;
And the down-trodden vineyards are flowing, but not with the blood of the vine.

V.

Deadly and dark was the tempest that swept o'er that vine-cover'd plain;
Burning and withering, its drops fell like fire on the grass and the grain.

But the gloomiest moments must pass to their graves, as the brightest and best,
And thus once again did fair Fiesole look o'er a valley of rest.
But oh ! in that brief hour of horror—that bloody eclipse of the sun,
What hopes and what dreams have been shattered?—what ruin and wrong have been done?
What blossoms for ever have faded, that promised a harvest so fair;
And what joys are laid low in the dust that eternity cannot repair !

VI.

Look down on that valley of sorrows, whence the land-marks of joy are removed,
Oh ! where is the darling Francesca, so loving, so dearly beloved?
And where are her children, whose voices rose music-winged once from this spot?
And why are the sweet bells now silent? and where is the vine-cover'd cot?
'Tis morning—no Mass-bell is tolling; 'tis noon, but no Angelus rings;
'Tis evening, but no drops of melody rain from her rose-coloured wings.
Ah! where have the angels, poor Paolo, that guarded thy cottage door, flown?
And why have they left thee to wander thus childless and joyless alone?

VII.

His children had grown into manhood, but ah! in that terrible night
Which had fallen on fair Florence, they perished away in the thick of the fight;
Heart-blinded, his darling Francesca went seeking her sons through the gloom,
And found them at length, and lay down full of love by their side in the tomb.
That cottage—its vine-cover'd porch and its myrtle-bound garden of flowers,
That church whence the bells with their voices drown'd the sound of the fast-flying hours,
Both are levelled and laid in the dust, and the sweet-sounding bells have been torn
From their down-fallen beams, and away by the red hand of sacrilege borne.

VIII.

As the smith, in the dark sullen smithy, striketh quick on the anvil below,
Thus Fate on the heart of the old man struck rapidly blow after blow,
Wife, children, and home passed away from that heart once so burning and bold,
As the bright shining sparks disappear when the red glowing metal grows cold.
He missed not the voice of his bells while those death-sounds struck loud in his ears,
He missed not the church where they rang while his old eyes were blinded with tears,

But the calmness of grief coming soon, in its sadness and silence profound,
He listened once more as of old, but in vain, for the joy-bearing sound.

IX.

When he felt that indeed they had vanished, one fancy then flashed on his brain,
One wish made his heart beat anew with a throbbing it could not restrain—
'Twas to wander away from fair Florence, its memory and dream-haunted dells,
And to seek up and down through the earth for the sound of his magical bells.
They will speak of the hopes that have perished, and the joys that have faded so fast,
Wing'd with the music of memory, they will seem but the voice of the past;
As when the bright morning has vanished, and evening grows starless and dark,
The nightingale song of remembrance recalls the sweet strain of the lark.

X.

Thus restlessly wandering through Italy—now by the Adrian sea,
In the shrine of Loretto, he bendeth his travel-tired, suppliant knee;
And now by the brown troubled Tiber he taketh his desolate way,
And in many a shady basilica lingers to listen and pray.

He prays for the dear ones snatched from him—nor vainly nor hopelessly prays,
For the strong faith in union hereafter like a beam o'er his cold bosom plays;
He listens at morning and evening, when matin and vesper bells toll,
But their sweetest sounds grate on his ear, and their music is harsh to his soul.

XI.

For though sweet are the bells that ring out from the tall campanili of Rome,
Ah! they are not the dearer and sweeter ones, tuned with the memory of home.
So leaving proud Rome and fair Tivoli, southward the old man must stray,
'Till he reaches the Eden of waters that sparkle in Napoli's bay:
He sees not the blue waves of Baiæ, nor Ischia's summits of brown—
He sees but the high campanili that rise o'er each far-gleaming town.
Driven restlessly onward, he saileth away to the bright land of Spain,
And seeketh thy shrine, Santiago, and stands by the western main.

XII.

A bark bound for Erin lay waiting, he entered like one in a dream;
Fair winds in the full purple sails led him soon to the Shannon's broad stream.

'Twas an evening that Florence might envy, so rich was the lemon-hued air,
As it lay on lone Scattery's island, or lit the green mountains of Clare;
The wide-spreading old giant river rolled his waters as smooth and as still
As if Oonagh, with all her bright nymphs, had come down from the far fairy hill[5],
To fling her enchantments around on the mountains, the air, and the tide,
And to soothe the worn heart of the old man who looked from the dark vessel's side.

XIII.

Borne on the current, the vessel glides smoothly but swiftly away,
By Carrigaholt, and by many a green sloping headland and bay,
'Twixt Cratloe's blue hills and green woods, and the soft sunny shores of Tervoe,
And now the fair city of Limerick spreads out on the broad bank below;
Still nearer and nearer approaching, the mariners look o'er the town,
The old man sees nought but St. Mary's square tower, with its battlements brown.
He listens—as yet all is silent, but now, with a sudden surprise,
A rich peal of melody rings from that tower through the clear evening skies!

XIV.

One note is enough—his eye moistens, his heart, long so wither'd, outswells,
He has found them—the sons of his labours—his musical, magical bells!
At each stroke all the bright past returneth, around him the sweet Arno shines,
His children—his darling Francesca—his purple-clad trellis of vines!
Leaning forward, he listens—he gazes—he hears in that wonderful strain
The long-silent voices that murmur, "Oh, leave us not, father, again!"
'Tis granted—he smiles—his eye closes—the breath from his white lips hath fled—
The father has gone to his children—the old Campanaro is dead!

Alice and Ana.

ALICE AND UNA.

A Tale of Céim-an-eich[6].

I.

Ah! the pleasant time hath vanished, ere our wretched doubtings banished
All the graceful spirit-people, children of the earth and sea,
Whom in days now dim and olden, when the world was fresh and golden,
Every mortal could behold in haunted rath, and tower, and tree—
They have vanished, they are banished—ah! how sad the loss for thee,
Lonely Céim-an-eich!

II.

Still some scenes are yet enchanted by the charms that Nature granted,
Still are peopled, still are haunted, by a graceful spirit band.
Peace and beauty have their dwelling where the infant streams are welling,
Where the mournful waves are knelling on Glengariff's coral strand[7],
Or where, on Killarney's mountains, Grace and Terror smiling stand,
Like sisters, hand in hand!

III.

Still we have a new romance in fire-ships through the tamed seas glancing,
And the snorting and the prancing of the mighty engine steed;
Still, Astolpho-like, we wander through the boundless azure yonder,
Realizing what seemed fonder than the magic tales we read—
Tales of wild Arabian wonder, where the fancy all is freed—
Wilder far indeed!

IV.

Now that Earth once more hath woken, and the trance of Time is broken,
And the sweet word—Hope—is spoken, soft and sure, though none know how,—
Could we—could we only see all these, the glories of the Real,
Blended with the lost Ideal, happy were the old world now—
Woman in its fond believing—man with iron arm and brow—
Faith and Work its vow!

V.

Yes! the Past shines clear and pleasant, and there's glory in the Present;
And the Future, like a crescent, lights the deepening sky of Time;
And that sky will yet grow brighter, if the Worker and the Writer—
If the Sceptre and the Mitre join in sacred bonds sublime.
With two glories shining o'er them, up the coming years they'll climb,
Earth's great evening as its prime!

VI.

With a sigh for what is fading, but, O Earth! with no upbraiding,—
For we feel that time is braiding newer, fresher flowers for thee,—

We will speak, despite our grieving, words of Loving and Believing,
Tales we vowed when we were leaving awful Ciém-an-eich—
Where the sever'd rocks resemble fragments of a frozen sea,
And the wild deer flee!

VII.

'Tis the hour when flowers are shrinking, when the weary sun is sinking,
And his thirsty steeds are drinking in the cooling western sea;
When young Maurice lightly goeth, where the tiny streamlet floweth,
And the struggling moonlight showeth where his path must be,—
Path whereon the wild goats wander fearlessly and free
Through dark Céim-an-eich.

VIII.

As a hunter, danger daring, with his dogs the brown moss sharing.
Little thinking, little caring, long a wayward youth lived he;
But his bounding heart was regal, and he looked as looks the eagle,
And he flew as flies the beagle, who the panting stag doth see:
Love, who spares a fellow-archer, long had let him wander free
Through wild Céim-an-eich!

IX.

But at length the hour drew nigher when his heart should feel that fire;
Up the mountain high and higher had he hunted from the dawn;
Till the weeping fawn descended, where the earth and ocean blended,
And with hope its slow way wended to a little grassy lawn:
It is safe, for gentle Alice to her saving breast hath drawn
Her almost sister fawn.

X.

Alice was a chieftain's daughter, and, though many suitors sought her,
She so loved Glengariff's water that she let her lovers pine;
Her eye was beauty's palace, and her cheek an ivory chalice,
Through which the blood of Alice gleamed soft as rosiest wine,
And her lips like lusmore blossoms which the fairies intertwine[8],
And her heart a golden mine.

XI.

She was gentler and shyer than the light fawn that stood by her,
And her eyes emit a fire soft and tender as her soul;
Love's dewy light doth drown her, and the braided locks that crown her
Than autumn's trees are browner, when the golden shadows roll
Through the forests in the evening, when cathedral turrets toll,
And the purple sun advanceth to its goal.

XII.

Her cottage was a dwelling all regal homes excelling,
But, ah! beyond the telling was the beauty round it spread—
The wave and sunshine playing, like sisters each arraying—
Far down the sea-plants swaying upon their coral bed,
As languid as the tresses on a sleeping maiden's head,
When the summer breeze is dead.

XIII.

Need we say that Maurice loved her, and that no blush reproved her
When her throbbing bosom moved her to give the heart she gave;
That by dawn-light and by twilight, and, O blessed moon! by thy light—

When the twinkling stars on high light the wanderer o'er the wave—
His steps unconscious led him where Glengariff's waters lave
Each mossy bank and cave.

XIV.

He thitherward is wending—o'er the vale is night descending—
Quick his step, but quicker sending his herald thoughts before;
By rocks and streams before him, proud and hopeful on he bore him;
One star was shining o'er him—in his heart of hearts two more—
And two other eyes, far brighter than a human head e'er wore,
Unseen were shining o'er.

XV.

These eyes are not of woman—no brightness merely human
Could, planet-like, illumine the place in which they shone;
But nature's bright works vary—there are beings, light and airy,
Whom mortal lips call fairy, and Una she is one—
Sweet sisters of the moonbeams and daughters of the sun,
Who along the curling cool waves run.

XVI.

As summer lightning dances amid the heavens' expanses,
Thus shone the burning glances of those flashing fairy eyes;
Three splendours there were shining—three passions intertwining—
Despair and hope combining their deep contrasted dyes,
With jealousy's green lustre, as troubled ocean vies
With the blue of summer skies!

XVII.

She was a fairy creature, of heavenly form and feature—
Not Venus' self could teach her a newer, sweeter grace—

Not Venus' self could lend her an eye so dark and tender,
Half softness and half splendour, as lit her lily face;
And as the choral planets move harmonious throughout space,
There was music in her pace.

XVIII.

But when at times she started, and her blushing lips were parted,
And a pearly lustre darted from her teeth so ivory white,
You'd think you saw the gliding of two rosy clouds dividing,
And the crescent they were hiding gleam forth upon your sight
Through these lips, as through the portals of a heaven pure and bright,
Came a breathing of delight!

XIX.

She had seen young Maurice lately walk forth so proud and stately,
And tenderly and greatly she loved him from that hour;
Unseen she roamed beside him, to guard him and to guide him,
But now she must divide him from her human rival's power.
Ah! Alice—gentle Alice! the storm begins to lower
That may crush Glengariff's flower!

XX.

The moon, that late was gleaming, as calm as childhood's dreaming,
Is hid, and, wildly screaming, the stormy winds arise;
And the clouds flee quick and faster before their sullen master,
And the shadows of disaster are falling from the skies;
Strange sights and sounds are rising—but, Maurice, be thou wise,
Nor heed the tempting cries.

XXI.

If ever mortal needed that council, surely he did;
But the wile has now succeeded—he wanders from his path;

The cloud its lightning sendeth, and its bolt the stout oak rendeth,
And the firm arbutus bendeth in the whirlwind, as a lath!
Now and then the moon looks out, but alas! its pale face hath
A dreadful look of wrath.

XXII.

In vain his strength he squanders—at each step he wider wanders—
Now he pauses—now he ponders where his present path may lead;
And, as he round is gazing, he sees—a sight amazing!—
Beneath him, calmly grazing, a noble jet-black steed.
"Now, Heaven be praised!" cried Maurice, "this is fortunate indeed—
From this labyrinth I'm freed!"

XXIII.

Upon its back he leapeth, but a shudder through him creepeth,
As the mighty monster sweepeth like a torrent through the dell;
His mane, so softly flowing, is now a meteor blowing,
And his burning eyes are glowing with the light of an inward hell;
And the red breath of his nostrils, like steam where the lightning fell;
And his hoofs have a thunder knell!

XXIV.

What words have we for painting the momentary fainting
That the rider's heart is tainting, as decay doth taint a corse?
But who will stoop to chiding, in a fancied courage priding,
When we know that he is riding the fearful Phooka Horse?[9]
Ah! his heart beats quick and faster than the smitings of remorse
As he sweepeth through the wild grass and gorse!

XXV.

As the avalanche comes crashing, 'mid the scattered streamlets splashing,
Thus backward wildly dashing flew the horse through Céim-an-eich—
Through that glen so wild and narrow back he darted like an arrow—
Round, round by Gougane Barra, and the fountains of the Lee;
O'er the Giant's Grave he leapeth, and he seems to own in fee
The mountains, and the rivers, and the sea!

XXVI.

From his flashing hoofs who shall lock the eagle homes of Malloc[10].
When he bounds, as bounds the Mialloch[11] in its wild and murmuring tide?
But as winter leadeth Flora, or the night leads on Aurora,
Or as shines green Glashenglora[12] along the black hill's side,
Thus, beside that demon monster, white and gentle as a bride,
A tender fawn is seen to glide.

XXVII.

It is the fawn that fled him, and that late to Alice led him,
But now it does not dread him, as it feigned to do before,
When down the mountain gliding, in that sheltered meadow hiding,
It left his heart abiding by wild Glengariff's shore:
For it was a gentle Fairy who the fawn's light form wore,
And who watched sweet Alice o'er.

XXVIII.

But the steed is backward prancing where late it was advancing,
And his flashing eyes are glancing, like the sun upon Loch Foyle;
The hardest granite crushing, through the thickest brambles brushing,
Now like a shadow rushing up the sides of Slieve-na-goil[13]!

And the fawn beside him gliding o'er the rough and broken soil,
Without fear and without toil.

XXIX.

Through woods, the sweet birds' leaf home, he rusheth to the sea foam,
Long, long the fairies' chief home, when the summer nights are cool,
And the blue sea, like a Syren, with its waves the steed environ,
Which hiss like furnace iron when plunged within a pool,
Then along among the islands where the water nymphs bear rule,
Through the bay to Adragool.

XXX.

Now he rises o'er Bearhaven, where he hangeth like a raven—
Ah! Maurice, though no craven, how terrible for thee!
To see the misty shading of the mighty mountains fading,
And thy winged fire-steed wading through the clouds as through a sea!
Now he feels the earth beneath him—he is loosen'd—he is free,
And asleep in Céim-an-eich.

XXXI.

Away the wild steed leapeth, while his rider calmly sleepeth
Beneath a rock which keepeth the entrance to the glen,
Which standeth like a castle, where are dwelling lord and vassal,
Where within are wine and wassail, and without are warrior men;
But save the sleeping Maurice, this castle cliff had then
No mortal denizen![14]

XXXII.

Now Maurice is awaking, for the solid earth is shaking,
And a sunny light is breaking through the slowly opening stone,

And a fair page at the portal crieth, "Welcome, welcome! mortal,
Leave thy world (at best a short ill), for the pleasant world we own;
There are joys by thee untasted, there are glories yet unknown—
Come kneel at Una's throne."

XXXIII.

With a sullen sound of thunder, the great rock falls asunder,
He looks around in wonder, and with ravishment awhile,
For the air his sense is chaining, with as exquisite a paining,
As when summer clouds are raining o'er a flowery Indian isle;
And the faces that surround him, oh! how exquisite their smile,
So free of mortal care and guile.

XXXIV.

These forms, oh! they are finer—these faces are diviner
Than, Phidias, even thine are, with all thy magic art;
For beyond an artist's guessing, and beyond a bard's expressing,
Is the face that truth is dressing with the feelings of the heart;
Two worlds are there together—Earth and Heaven have each a part—
And such, divinest Una, thou art!

XXXV.

And then the dazzling lustre of the hall in which they muster—
Where brightest diamonds cluster on the flashing walls around;
And the flying and advancing, and the sighing and the glancing,
And the music and the dancing on the flower-inwoven ground,
And the laughing and the feasting, and the quaffing and the sound,
In which their voices all are drowned,

XXXVI.

But the murmur now is hushing—there's a pushing and a rushing,
There's a crowding and a crushing, through that golden, fairy place,
Where a snowy veil is lifting, like the slow and silent shifting
Of a shining vapour drifting across the moon's pale face—
For there sits gentle Una, fairest queen of fairy race,
In her beauty, and her majesty, and grace.

XXXVII.

The moon by stars attended, on her pearly throne ascended,
Is not more purely splendid than this fairy-girted queen;
And when her lips had spoken, 'mid the charmed silence broken,
You'd think you had awoken in some bright Elysian scene;
For her voice than the lark's was sweeter, that sings in joy between
The heavens and the meadows green.

XXXVIII.

But her cheeks—ah! what are roses?—what are clouds where eve reposes?—
What are hues that dawn discloses?—to the blushes spreading there;
And what the sparkling motion of a star within the ocean,
To the crystal soft emotion that her lustrous dark eyes wear?
And the tresses of a moonless and a starless night are fair
To the blackness of her raven hair.

XXXIX.

Ah! Mortal, hearts have panted for what to thee is granted—
To see the halls enchanted of the spirit world revealed;
And yet no glimpse assuages the feverish doubt that rages
In the hearts of bards and sages wherewith they may be healed;

For this have pilgrims wandered—for this have votaries kneeled—
For this, too, has blood bedewed the field,

XL.

"And now that thou beholdest what the wisest and the oldest,
What the bravest and the boldest, have never yet descried,
Wilt thou come and share our being, be a part of what thou'rt seeing,
And flee, as we are fleeing, through the boundless ether wide?
Or along the silver ocean, or down deep where pearls hide?
And I, who am a queen, will be thy bride.

XLI.

"As an essence thou wilt enter the world's mysterious centre"—
And then the fairy bent her, imploring, to the youth—
"Thou'lt be free of death's cold ghastness, and, with a comet's fastness
Thou can'st wander through the vastness to the Paradise of Truth,
Each day a new joy bringing, which will never leave in sooth
The slightest stain of weariness and ruth."

XLII.

As he listened to the speaker, his heart grew weak and weaker—
Ah! Memory, go seek her, that maiden by the wave,
Who with terror and amazement is looking from her casement,
Where the billows at the basement of her nestled cottage rave,
At the moon, which struggles onward through the tempest, like the brave,
And which sinks within the clouds as in a grave.

XLIII.

All maidens will abhor us—and it's very painful for us
To tell how faithless Maurice forgot his plighted vow;
He thinks not of the breaking of the heart he late was seeking,
He but listens to her speaking, and but gazes on her brow;
And his heart has all consented, and his lips are ready now
With the awful and irrevocable vow.

XLIV.

While the word is there abiding, lo! the crowd is now dividing,
And, with sweet and gentle gliding, in before him came a fawn;
It was the same that fled him, and that seemed so much to dread him,
When it down in triumph led him to Glengariff's grassy lawn,
When, from rock to rock descending, to sweet Alice he was drawn,
As through Céim-an-eich he hunted from the dawn.

XLV.

The magic chain is broken—no fairy vow is spoken—
From his trance he hath awoken, and once again is free;
And gone is Una's palace, and vain the wild steed's malice,
And again to gentle Alice down he wends through Céim-an-eich:
The moon is calmly shining over mountain, stream, and tree,
And the yellow sea-plants glisten through the sea,

XLVI.

The sun his gold is flinging, the happy birds are singing,
And bells are gaily ringing along Glengariff's sea;

And crowds in many a galley to the happy marriage rally
Of the maiden of the valley and the youth of Céim-an-eich;
Old eyes with joy are weeping, as all ask on bended knee,
A blessing, gentle Alice, upon thee!

The Foray of Con O'Donnell.

THE FORAY OF CON O'DONNELL[15].

A. D. 1495.

I.

The evening shadows sweetly fall
Along the hills of Donegal[16],
Sweetly the rising moonbeams play
Along the shores of Inver Bay[17],
As smooth and white Loch Eask[18] expands
As Rosapenna's[19] silvery sands,
And quiet reigns o'er all thy fields,
Clan Dalaigh[20] of the golden shields.

II.

The Fairy Gun[21] is heard no more
To boom within the cavern'd shore,
With smoother roll the torrents flow
Adown the rocks of Assaroe[22];
Securely, till the coming day,
The red deer couch in far Glenvah,
And all is peace and calm around
O'Donnell's castled moat and mound.

III.

But in the hall there feast to-night
Full many a kern and many a knight,
And gentle dames, and clansmen strong,
And wandering Bards, with store of song:
The board is piled with smoking kine,
And smooth bright cups of Spanish wine,
And fish and fowl from stream and shaw,
And fragrant mead and usquebaugh.

IV.

The chief is at the table's head—
'Tis Con, the son of Hugh the Red—
The heir of Conal Golban's line[23];
With pleasure flushed, with pride and wine,
He cries, "Our dames adjudge it wrong,
To end our feast without the song;
Have we no Bard the strain to raise?
No foe to taunt, no maid to praise?

V.

"Where Beauty dwells the Bard should dwell,
What sweet lips speak the Bard should tell;
'Tis he should look for starry eyes,
And tell love's watchers where they rise:
To-night, if lips and eyes could do,
Bards were not wanting in Tirhugh;
For where have lips a rosier light,
And where are eyes more starry bright?"

VI.

Then young hearts beat along the board,
To praise the maid that each adored,
And lips as young would fain disclose
The love within; but one arose,
Grey as the rocks beside the main,
Grey as the mist upon the plain,—
A thoughtful, wandering, minstrel man,
And thus the aged bard began:—

VII.

"O Con, benevolent hand of peace!
O tower of valour firm and true!
Like mountain fawns, like snowy fleece,
Move the sweet maidens of Tirhugh.
Yet though through all thy realm I've strayed,
Where green hills rise and white waves fall,
I have not seen so fair a maid
As once I saw by Cushendall[24].

VIII.

"O Con, thou hospitable Prince!
Thou, of the open heart and hand,
Full oft I've seen the crimson tints
Of evening on the western land.
I've wandered north, I've wandered south,
Throughout Tirhugh in hut and hall,
But never saw so sweet a mouth
As whispered love by Cushendall.

IX.

"O Con, munificent in gifts!
I've seen the full round harvest moon
Gleam through the shadowy autumn drifts
Upon thy royal rock of Doune[25].
I've seen the stars that glittering lie
O'er all the night's dark mourning pall,
But never saw so bright an eye
As lit the glens of Cushendall.

X.

"I've wandered with a pleasant toil,
And still I wander in my dreams;
Even from thy white-stoned beach, Loch Foyle,
To Desmond of the flowing streams.
I've crossed the fair green plains of Meath,
To Dublin held in Saxon thrall;
But never saw such pearly teeth,
As her's that smiled by Cushendall.

XI.

"O Con! thou'rt rich in yellow gold,
Thy fields are filled with lowing kine,
Within thy castles wealth untold,
Within thy harbours fleets of wine;
But yield not, Con, to worldly pride,
Thou may'st be rich, but hast not all;
Far richer he who for his bride
Has won fair Anne of Cushendall.

XII.

"She leans upon a husband's arm,
Surrounded by a valiant clan,
In Antrim's Glynnes, by fair Glenarm,
Beyond the pearly-paven Bann;
Mid hazel woods no stately tree
Looks up to heaven more graceful-tall,
When summer clothes its boughs, than she,
Mac Donnell's wife of Cushendall!"

XIII.

The bard retires amid the throng,
No sweet applause rewards his song,
No friendly lip that guerdon breathes,
To bard more sweet than golden wreaths.
It might have been the minstrel's art
Had lost its power to move the heart,
It might have been his harp had grown
Too old to yield its wonted tone.

XIV.

But no, if hearts were cold and hard,
'Twas not the fault of harp or bard;
It was no false or broken sound
That failed to move the clansmen round.
Not these the men, nor these the times,
To nicely weigh the worth of rhymes;
'Twas what he said that made them chill,
And not his singing well or ill.

XV.

Already had the stranger band
Of Saxons swept the weakened land,
Already on the neighbouring hills
They named anew a thousand rills,
" Our fairest castles," pondered Con,
" Already to the foe are gone,
Our noblest forests feed the flame,
And now we lose our fairest dame."

XVI.

But though his cheek was white with rage,
He seemed to smile, and cried—" O Sage!
O honey-spoken bard of truth !
Mac Donnell is a valiant youth.
We long have been the Saxons' prey—
Why not the Scot as well as they?
He's of as good a robber line
As any Burke or Geraldine.

XVII.

" From Insi Gall[26], so speaketh fame,
From Insi Gall his people came;
From Insi Gall, where storm winds roar
Beyond grey Albin's icy shore.
His grandsire and his grandsire's son,
Full soon fat herds and pastures won;
But, by Columba! were we men,
We'd send the whole brood back again!

XVIII.

"Oh! had we iron hands to dare,
As we have waxen hearts to bear,
Oh! had we manly blood to shed,
Or even to tinge our cheeks with red,
No bard could say as you have said,
One of the race of Somerled—
A base intruder from the Isles—
Basks in our island's sunniest smiles!

XIX.

"But, not to mar our feast to-night
With what to morrow's sword may right,
O Bard of many songs! again
Awake thy sweet harp's silvery strain.
If beauty decks with peerless charm
Mac Donnell's wife in fair Glenarm,
Say does there bound in Antrim's meads
A steed to match O'Donnell's steeds?"

XX.

Submissive doth the Bard incline
His reverend head, and cries,—"O Con,
Thou heir of Conal Golban's line,—
I've sang the fair wife of Mac John;
You'll frown again as late you frowned,
But truth will out when lips are freed;
There's not a steed on Irish ground
To stand beside Mac Donnell's steed!

XXI.

"Thy horses bound o'er Eargals' plains,
Like meteor stars their red eyes gleam;
With silver hoofs and broidered reins,
They mount the hill and swim the stream;
But like the wind through Barnesmore,
Or white-maned wave through Carrig-Rede[27],
Or like a sea-bird to the shore,—
Thus swiftly sweeps Mac Donnell's steed!

XXII.

"A thousand graceful steeds had Fin,
Within lost Almhaim's fairy hall,
A thousand steeds as sleek of skin
As ever graced a chieftain's stall.
With gilded bridles oft they flew,
Young eagles in their lightning speed,
Strong as the cataract of Hugh[28],—
So swift and strong Mac Donnell's steed!"

XXIII.

Without the hearty word of praise,
Without the kindly smiling gaze,
Without the friendly hand to greet,
The daring Bard resumes his seat.
Even in the hospitable face
Of Con, the anger you could trace.
But generous Con his wrath suppressed,
For Owen was Clan Dalaigh's guest.

XXIV.

"Now, by Columba!" Con exclaimed,
"Methinks this Scot should be ashamed
To snatch at once, in sateless greed,
The fairest maid and finest steed;
My realm is dwindled in mine eyes,
I know not what to praise or prize,
And even my noble dog, O Bard,
Now seems unworthy my regard!"

XXV.

"When comes the raven of the sea
To nestle on an alien strand,
Oh! ever, ever will he be
The master of the subject land.
The fairest dame, he holdeth *her*—
For him the noblest steed doth bound;—
Your dog is but a household cur,
Compared to John Mac Donnell's hound!

XXVI.

"As fly the shadows o'er the grass,
He flies with step as light and sure,
He hunts the wolf through Trosstan pass,
And starts the deer by Lisànoure!
The music of the sabbath bells,
Oh, Con! has not a sweeter sound,
Than when along the valley swells
The cry of John Mac Donnell's hound.

XXVII.

"His stature tall, his body long,
His back like night, his breast like snow,
His fore-leg pillar-like and strong,
His hind-leg like a bended bow;
Rough, curling hair, head long and thin,
His ear a leaf so small and round:
Not Bran, the favourite hound of Fin,
Could rival John Mac Donnell's hound.

XXVIII.

"O Con! thy bard will sing no more,
There is a fearful time at hand;
The Scot is on the northern shore,
The Saxon in the eastern land,
The hour comes on with quicker flight,
When all who live on Irish ground
Must render to the stranger's might
Both maid and wife, and steed and hound!"

XXIX.

The trembling bard again retires,
But now he lights a thousand fires;
The pent-up flame bursts out at length,
In all its burning, tameless strength.
You'd think each clansman's foe was by,
So sternly flashed each angry eye;
You'd think 'twas in the battle's clang,
O'Donnell's thundering accents rang!

XXX.

"No! by my sainted kinsman[29], no!
This foul disgrace must not be so;
No! by the Shrines of Hy, I've sworn,
This foulest wrong must not be borne.
A better steed!—a fairer wife!—
Was ever truer cause of strife?
A swifter hound!—a better steed!—
Columba! these are cause indeed!"

XXXI.

Again, like spray from mountain rill,
Up started Con:—"By Collum Kille,
And by the blessed light of day,
This matter brooketh no delay.
The moon is down—the morn is up—
Come, kinsmen, drain a parting cup,
And swear to hold our next carouse,
With John Mac John Mac Donnell's spouse!

XXXII.

"We've heard the song the Bard has sung,
And as a healing herb among
Most poisonous weeds may oft be found,
So of this woman, steed, and hound,
The song has burned into our hearts,
And yet a lesson it imparts,
Had we but sense to read aright
The galling words we heard to-night.

XXXIII.

"What lesson does the good hound teach?
Oh! to be faithful each to each!
What lesson gives the noble steed?
Oh! to be swift in thought and deed!
What lesson gives the peerless wife?
Oh! there is victory after strife;
Sweet is the triumph, rich the spoil,
Pleasant the slumber after toil!"

XXXIV.

They drain the cup, they leave the hall,
They seek the armoury and stall,
The shield re-echoing to the spear
Proclaims the foray far and near;
And soon around the castle gate
Full sixty steeds impatient wait,
And every steed a knight upon—
The strong small-powerful force of Con!

XXXV.

Their lances in the red dawn flash,
As down by Easky's side they dash;
Their quilted jackets shine the more,
From gilded leather broidered o'er;
With silver spurs, and silken rein,
And costly riding-shoes from Spain;—
Ah! much thou hast to fear, Mac John,
The strong small-powerful force of Con!

XXXVI.

As borne upon autumnal gales,
Wild whirring gannets pierce the sails
Of barks that sweep by Arran's shore[30],
Thus swept the train through Barnesmore.
Through many a varied scene they ran,
By Castle Fin, and fair Strabane,
By many a hill, and many a clan,
Across the Foyle and o'er the Bann:—

XXXVII.

Then stopping in their eagle flight,
They waited for the coming night,
And then, as Antrim's rivers rush
Straight from their founts with sudden gush,
Nor turn their strong, brief streams aside,
Until the sea receives their tide,—
Thus rushed upon the doomed Mac John
The swift small-powerful force of Con!

XXXVIII.

They took the castle by surprise,
No star was in the angry skies,
The moon lay dead within her shroud
Of thickly folded ashen cloud;
They found the steed within his stall,
The hound within the oaken hall,
The peerless wife of thousand charms,
Within her slumbering husband's arms:

XXXIX.

The Bard had pictured to the life
The beauty of Mac Donnell's wife.
Not Evir[31] could with her compare
For snowy hand and shining hair;
The glorious banner morn unfurls
Were dark beside her golden curls,
And yet the blackness of her eye
Was darker than the moonless sky!

XL.

If lovers listen to my lay,
Description is but thrown away;
If lovers read this antique tale,
What need I speak of red or pale?
The fairest form and brightest eye
Are simply those for which they sigh;
The truest picture is but faint
To what a lover's heart can paint.

XLI.

Well, she was fair, and Con was bold,
But in the strange, wild days of old;
To one rough hand was oft decreed
The noblest and the blackest deed.
'Twas pride that spurred O'Donnell on,
But still a generous heart had Con;
He wished to show that he was strong,
And not to do a bootless wrong.

XLII.

But now there's neither thought nor time
For generous act or bootless crime;
Far other cares the thoughts demand
Of the small-powerful victor band.
They tramp along the old oak floors,
They burst the strong-bound chamber doors;
In all the pride of lawless power,
Some seek the vault, and some the tower.

XLIII.

And some from out the postern pass,
And find upon the dew-wet grass
Full many a head of dappled deer,
And many a full-eye'd brown-back'd steer,
And heifers of the fragrant skins—
The pride of Antrim's grassy Glynnes,—
Which with their spears they drive along,
A numerous, startled, bellowing throng.

XLIV.

They leave the castle stripped and bare,
Each has his labour, each his share;
For some have cups, and some have plate,
And some have scarlet cloaks of state,
And some have wine, and some have ale,
And some have coats of iron mail,
And some have helms, and some have spears,
And all have lowing cows and steers!

XLV.

Away! away! the morning breaks
O'er Antrim's hundred hills and lakes;
Away! away! the dawn begins
To gild grey Antrim's deepest Glynnes;
The rosy steeds of morning stop
As if to graze on Collin Top:
Ere they have left it bare and grey,
O'Donnell must be far away!

XLVI.

The chieftain, on a raven steed,
Himself the peerless dame doth lead—
Now like a pallid icy corse,—
And lifts her on her husband's horse;
His left hand holds his captive's rein,
His right is on his black steed's mane,
And from the bridle to the ground
Hangs the long leash that binds the hound.

XLVII.

And thus before his victor clan,
Rides Con O'Donnell in the van;
Upon his left the drooping dame—
Upon his right, in wrath and shame,
With one hand free, and one hand tied,
And eyes firm fixed upon his bride,
Vowing dread vengeance yet on Con,
Rides scowling, silent, stern Mac John.

XLVIII.

They move with steps as swift as still,
'Twixt Collin mount and Slemish hill,
They glide along the misty plain,
And ford the sullen muttering Maine;
Some drive the cattle o'er the hills,
And some along the dried-up rills;
But still a strong force doth surround
The chiefs, the dame, the steed, and hound.

XLIX.

Thus ere the bright-faced day arose,
The Bann lay broad between the foes.
But how to paint the inward scorn—
The self-reproach of those that morn,
Who waking found their chieftain gone,
Their cattle swept from field and bawn—
Their chieftain's castle stormed and drained,
And, worse than all, their honour stained!

L.

But when the women heard that Anne—
The queen, the glory of the clan,
Was carried off by midnight foes—
Heavens! such despairing screams arose,
Such shrieks of agony and fright,
As only can be heard at night,
When Clough-i-Stookan's mystic rock
The wail of drowning men doth mock[32]!

LI.

But thirty steeds are in the town,
And some are like the ripe heath, brown,
Some like the alder berries, black,
Some like the vessel's foamy track;
But be they black, or brown, or white,
They are as swift as fawns in flight,
No quicker speed the sea-gull hath
When sailing through the Grey Man's Path[33]!

LII.

Soon are they saddled, soon they stand,
Ready to own the rider's hand—
Ready to dash with loosened rein
Up the steep hill, and o'er the plain—
Ready, without the prick of spurs,
To strike the gold cups from the furze:
And now they start with winged pace—
God speed them in their noble chase!

LIII.

By this time, on Ben Bradagh's height,
Brave Con had rested in his flight,
Beneath him, in the horizon's blue,
Lay his own valleys of Tirhugh.
It may have been the thought of home,
While resting on that mossy dome,
It may have been his native trees
That woke his mind to thoughts like these.

LIV.

"The race is o'er, the spoil is won,
And yet what boots it all I've done?
What boots it to have snatched away
This steed, and hound, and cattle prey?
What boots it, with an iron hand
To tear a chieftain from his land,
And dim that sweetest light that lies
In a fond wife's adoring eyes?

LV.

"If thus I madly teach my clan,
What can I hope from beast or man?
Fidelity a crime is found,
Or else why chain this faithful hound?
Obedience, too, a crime must be,
Or else this steed were roaming free;
And woman's love the worst of sins,
Or Anne were queen of Antrim's Glynnes!

LVI.

"If, when I reach my home to-night,
I see the yellow moonbeam's light
Gleam through the broken gate and wall
Of my strong fort of Donegal—
If I behold my kinsmen slain,
My barns devoid of golden grain,
How can I curse the pirate crew
For doing what this hour I do?

LVII.

" Well, in Columba's blessed name,
This day shall be a day of fame—
A day when Con in victory's hour
Gave up the untasted sweets of power—
Gave up the fairest dame on earth,
The noblest steed that e'er wore girth—
The noblest hound of Irish breed,
And all to do a generous deed."

LVIII.

He turned and loosed Mac Donnell's hand,
And led him where his steed doth stand;
He placed the bride of peerless charms
Within his longing, outstretched arms;
He freed the hound from chain and band,
Which, leaping, licked his master's hand;
And thus, while wonder held the crowd,
The generous chieftain spoke aloud:—

LIX.

" Mac John, I heard in wrathful hour
That thou in Antrim's Glynnes possessed
The fairest pearl, the sweetest flower,
That ever bloomed on Erin's breast.
I burned to think such prize should fall
To any Scotch or Saxon man,
But find that Nature makes us all
The children of one world-spread clan.

LX.

" Within thy arms thou now dost hold
A treasure of more worth and cost
Than all the thrones and crowns of gold
That valour ever won or lost;
Thine is that outward perfect form,
Thine, too, the subtler inner life,
The love that doth that bright shape warm:—
Take back, Mac John, thy peerless wife!

LXI.

" They praised thy steed. With wrath and grief
I felt my heart within me bleed,
That any but an Irish chief
Should press the back of such a steed;
I might to yonder smiling land
The noble beast reluctant lead;
But no!—he'd miss thy guiding hand—
Take back, Mac John, thy noble steed.

LXII.

" The praises of thy matchless hound,
Burned in my breast like acrid wine;
I swore no chief on Irish ground
Should own a nobler hound than mine;
'Twas rashly sworn, and must not be—
He'd pine to hear the well-known sound,
With which thou called him to thy knee—
Take back, Mac John, thy matchless hound.

LXIII.

"Mac John, I stretch to your's and you,
This hand beneath God's blessed sun,
And for the wrong that I might do,
Forgive the wrong that I have done;
To-morrow all that we have ta'en
Shall doubly, trebly be restored—
The cattle to the grassy plain,
The goblets to the oaken board.

LXIV.

"My people from our richest meads
Shall drive the best our broad lands hold—
For every steed a hundred steeds,
For every steer a hundred fold—
For every scarlet cloak of state,
A hundred cloaks all stiff with gold;
And may we be with hearts elate
Still older friends as we grow old.

LXV.

"Thou'st bravely won an Irish bride—
An Irish bride of grace and worth—
Oh! let the Irish nature glide
Into thy heart from this hour forth;
An Irish home thy sword has won,
A new-found mother blessed the strife;
Oh! be that mother's fondest son,
And love the land that gives you life!

LXVI.

"Betwixt the Isles and Antrim's coast,
The Scotch and Irish waters blend;
But who shall tell, with idle boast,
Where one begins and one doth end?
"Ah! when shall that glad moment gleam,
When all our hearts such spell shall feel?
And blend in one broad Irish stream,
On Irish ground, for Ireland's weal?

LXVII.

"Love the dear land in which you live,
Live in the land you ought to love;
Take root, and let thy branches give
Fruits to the soil they wave above;
No matter for thy foreign name,
No matter what thy sires have done,
No matter whence or when you came,
The land shall claim you as a son!"

LXVIII.

As in the azure fields on high,
When Spring lights up the April sky—
The thick battalioned dusky clouds
Fly o'er the plain like routed crowds
Before the sun's resistless might!—
Where all was dark, now all is bright—
The very clouds have turned to light,
And with the conquering beams unite!—

LXIX.

Thus o'er the face of John Mac John
A thousand varying shades have gone;
Jealousy, anger, rage, disdain,
Sweep o'er his brow—a dusky train;
But nature, like the beam of spring,
Chaseth the crowd on sunny wing;
Joy warms his heart, hope lights his eye,
And the dark passions routed fly!

LXX.

The hands are clasped—the hound is freed,
Gone is Mac John with wife and steed,
He meets his spearsmen some few miles,
And turns their scowling frowns to smiles:—
At morn the crowded march begins
Of steeds and cattle for the Glynnes—
Well for poor Erin's wrongs and griefs,
If thus would join her severed chiefs!

The Voyage of Saint Brendan.

THE VOYAGE OF ST. BRENDAN[34].

A. D. 545.

PART I.

The Vocation.

"Interea S. Brendanus ad S. Itam nutricem suam perrexit: quæ virgo Dei Sancta eum cum pietate pectore suo complexit: cujus mentem Vir Sanctus de miraculis, quæ vidit in Oceano, refecit."—COLGAN'S ACTA SANCTORUM, p. 74.

I.

O ITA![35] mother of my heart and mind—
My nourisher—my fosterer—my friend,
Who taught me first, to God's great will resigned,
Before his shining altar-steps to bend.
Who poured his word upon my soul like balm,
And on mine eyes, what pious fancy paints—
And on mine ear the sweetly-swelling psalm,
And all the sacred knowledge of the saints.

II.

Who but to thee, my mother, should be told,
Of all the wonders I have seen afar?—
Islands more green, and suns of brighter gold
Than this dear land, or yonder blazing star;

Of hills that bear the fruit-trees on their tops,
And seas that dimple with eternal smiles;
Of airs from heaven that fan the golden crops,
O'er the great ocean, 'mid the blessed isles!

III.

Thou knowest, O my mother! how to thee,
The blessed Ercus led me when a boy,
And how within thine arms and at thy knee,
I learned the lore that death cannot destroy;
And how I parted hence with bitter tears,
And felt when turning from thy friendly door,
In the reality of ripening years,
My paradise of childhood was no more.

IV.

I wept—but not with sin such tear drops flow,
I sighed—for earthly things with heaven entwine;
Tears make the harvest of the heart to grow,
And love, though human, is almost divine.
The heart that loves not knows not how to pray;
That eye can never smile that never weeps;
'Tis through our sighs Hope's kindling sunbeams play,
And through our tears the bow of Promise peeps.

V.

I grew to manhood by the western wave,
Among the mighty mountains on the shore;
My bed the rock within some natural cave,
My food, whate'er the seas or seasons bore;

My occupation, morn and noon and night:
The only dream my hasty slumbers gave,
Was Time's unheeding, unreturning flight,
And the great world that lies beyond the grave.

VI.

And thus, where'er I went, all things to me
Assumed the one deep colour of my mind;
Great nature's prayer rose from the murmuring sea,
And sinful man sighed in the wintry wind.
The thick-veiled clouds by shedding many a tear,
Like penitents, grew purified and bright,
And, bravely struggling through earth's atmosphere,
Passed to the regions of eternal light.

VII.

I loved to watch the clouds now dark and dun,
In long procession and funereal line,
Pass with slow pace across the glorious sun,
Like hooded monks before a dazzling shrine.
And now with gentler beauty as they rolled
Along the azure vault in gladsome May,
Gleaming pure white, and edged with broidered gold,
Like snowy vestments on the Virgin's day.

VIII.

And then I saw the mighty sea expand
Like Time's unmeasured and unfathomed waves,
One with its tide-marks on the ridgy sand,
The other with its line of weedy graves;

And as beyond the outstretched wave of time,
The eye of Faith a brighter land may meet,
So did I dream of some more sunny clime
Beyond the waste of waters at my feet.

IX.

Some clime where man, unknowing and unknown,
For God's refreshing word still gasps and faints;
Or happier rather some Elysian zone,
Made for the habitation of his saints;
Where nature's love the sweat of labour spares,
Nor turns to usury the wealth it lends,
Where the rich soil spontaneous harvest bears,
And the tall tree with milk-filled clusters bends.

X.

The thought grew stronger with my growing days,
Even like to manhood's strengthening mind and limb,
And often now amid the purple haze
That evening breathed upon the horizon's rim—
Methought, as there I sought my wished-for home,
I could descry amid the waters green,
Full many a diamond shrine and golden dome,
And crystal palaces of dazzling sheen.

XI.

And then I longed with impotent desire,
Even for the bow whereby the Python bled.
That I might send one dart of living fire
Into that land, before the vision fled.

And thus at length fix thy enchanted shore,
Hy-Brasail[36]—Eden of the western wave!
That thou again wouldst fade away no more,
Buried and lost within thy azure grave.

XII.

But angels came and whispered as I dreamt,
"This is no phantom of a frenzied brain—
God shows this land from time to time to tempt
Some daring mariner across the main:
By thee the mighty venture must be made,
By thee shall myriad souls to Christ be won!
Arise, depart, and trust to God for aid!"
I woke, and kneeling cried, "His will be done!"

PART II.

Ara of the Saints[37].

I.

Hearing how blessed Enda[38] lived apart,
Amid the sacred caves of Ara-mhor,
And how beneath his eye, spread like a chart,
Lay all the isles of that remotest shore;
And how he had collected in his mind
All that was known to man of the Old Sea[39],
I left the Hill of Miracles[40] behind,
And sailed from out the shallow sandy Leigh[41].

II.

Betwixt the Samphire Isles[42], swam my light skiff,
And like an arrow flew through Fenor Sound[43],
Swept by the pleasent strand[44], and the tall cliff
Whereon the pale rose amethysts are found[45].
Rounded Moyferta's rocky point[46], and crossed
The mouth of stream-streaked Erin's mightiest tide,
Whose troubled waves break o'er the City lost,
Chafed by the marble turrets that they hide[47].

III.

Beneath Ibrickan's hills, moory and tame[48],
And Inniscaorach's caves, so wild and dark[49],
I sailed along. The white-faced otter came[50],
And gazed in wonder on my floating bark.
The soaring gannet[51] perched upon my mast,
And the proud bird, that flies but o'er the sea[52],
Wheeled o'er my head: and the girrinna passed
Upon the branch of some life-giving tree[53].

IV.

Leaving the awful cliffs of Corcomroe,
I sought the rocky eastern isle, that bears
The name of blessed Coemhan, who doth show
Pity unto the storm-tossed seaman's prayers[54];
Then crossing Bealach-na-fearbac's treacherous sound[55],
I reached the middle isle, whose citadel
Looks like a monarch from its throne around;
And there I rested by St. Kennerg's well[56].

V.

Again I sailed, and crossed the stormy sound
That lies beneath Binn-Aite's rocky height[57]—
And there, upon the shore, the Saint I found
Waiting my coming through the tardy night.
He led me to his home beside the wave,
Where, with his monks, the pious father dwelled,
And to my listening ear he freely gave
The sacred knowledge that his bosom held.

VI.

When I proclaimed the project that I nursed,
How 'twas for this that I his blessing sought,
An irrepressible cry of joy outburst
From his pure lips, that blessed me for the thought.
He said, that he, too, had in visions strayed
Over the untracked ocean's billowy foam;
Bid me have hope, that God would give me aid,
And bring me safe back to my native home.

VII.

Oft, as we paced that marble-covered land[58],
Would blessed Enda tell me wondrous tales—
How, for the children of his love, the hand
Of the Omnipotent Father never fails—
How his own sister, standing by the side
Of the great sea, which bore no human bark,
Spread her light cloak upon the conscious tide,
And sailed thereon securely as an ark[59].

VIII.

And how the winds become the willing slaves
Of those who labour in the work of God;
And how Scothinus walked upon the waves,
Which seemed to him the meadow's verdant sod[60].
How he himself came hither with his flock,
To teach the infidels from Corcomroe[61];
Upon the floating breast of the hard rock,
Which lay upon the glistening sands below[62].

IX.

But not alone of miracles and joys
Would Enda speak—he told me of his dream;
When blessed Kieran went to Clon-mac-nois,
To found the sacred churches by the stream—
How he did weep to see the Angels flee
Away from Arran, as a place accursed;
And men tear up the island-shading tree,
Out of the soil from which it sprung at first[63].

X.

At length I tore me from the good man's sight,
And o'er Loch Lurgan's mouth took my lone way,
Which, in the sunny morning's golden light,
Shone like the burning lake of Lassaræ[64],
Now 'neath Heaven's frown—and now, beneath its smile—
Borne on the tide, or driven before the gale;
And, as I passed Mac Dara's sacred Isle,
Thrice bowed my mast, and thrice let down my sail[65].

XI.

Westward of Arran, as I sailed away,
I saw the fairest sight eye can behold,—
Rocks which, illumined by the morning's ray,
Seemed like a glorious city built of gold.
Men moved along each sunny shining street,
Fires seemed to blaze, and curling smoke to rise,
When lo! the city vanished, and a fleet,
With snowy sails, rose on my ravished eyes[66].

XII.

Thus having sought for knowledge and for strength,
For the unheard of voyage that I planned,
I left these myriad isles, and turned at length
Southward my bark, and sought my native land.
There I made all things ready, day by day,
The wicker boat, with ox-skins covered o'er[67]—
Chose the good monks companions of my way,
And waited for the wind to leave the shore.

PART III.

The Voyage.

I.

At length the long-expected morning came,
When from the opening arms of that wild bay,
Beneath the hill that bears my humble name[68],
Over the waves we took our untracked way:
Sweetly the morn lay on tarn and rill,
Gladly the waves played in its golden light,
And the proud top of the majestic hill
Shone in the azure air—serene and bright[69].

II.

Over the sea we flew that sunny morn,
Not without natural tears and human sighs,
For who can leave the land where he was born,
And where, perchance, a buried mother lies;
Where all the friends of riper manhood dwell,
And where the playmates of his childhood sleep:
Who can depart, and breathe a cold farewell,
Nor let his eyes their honest tribute weep?

III.

Our little bark, kissing the dimpled smiles
On ocean's cheek, flew like a wanton bird,
And then the land, with all its hundred isles,
Faded away, and yet we spoke no word.
Each silent tongue held converse with the past,
Each moistened eye looked round the circling wave,
And, save the spot where stood our trembling mast,
Saw all things hid within one mighty grave.

IV.

We were alone, on the wide, watery waste—
Nought broke its bright monotony of blue,
Save where the breeze the flying billows chased,
Or where the clouds their purple shadows threw.
We were alone—the pilgrims of the sea—
One boundless azure desert round us spread;
No hope—no trust—no strength, except in THEE,
Father, who once the pilgrim-people led.

V.

And when the bright-faced sun resigned his throne
Unto the Ethiop queen, who rules the night,—
Who, with her pearly crown and starry zone,
Fills the dark dome of heaven with silvery light,—
As on we sailed, beneath her milder sway,
And felt within our hearts her holier power,
We ceased from toil, and humbly knelt to pray,
And hailed with vesper hymns the tranquil hour!

VI.

For then, indeed, the vaulted heavens appeared
A fitting shrine to hear their Maker's praise,
Such as no human architect has reared,
Where gems, and gold, and precious marbles blaze.
What earthly temple such a roof can boast?—
What flickering lamp with the rich star-light vies,
When the round moon rests, like the sacred Host,
Upon the azure altar of the skies?

VII.

We breathed aloud the Christian's filial prayer,
Which makes us brothers even with the Lord;
"Our Father," cried we, in the midnight air,
"In heaven and earth be thy great name adored;
May thy bright kingdom, where the angels are,
Replace this fleeting world, so dark and dim."
And then, with eyes fixed on some glorious star,
We sang the Virgin-Mother's vesper hymn!

VIII.

"Hail brightest star! that o'er life's troubled sea
Shines pitying down from heaven's elysian blue!
Mother and maid, we fondly look to thee,
Fair gate of bliss, where Heaven beams brightly through.
Star of the morning! guide our youthful days,
Shine on our infant steps in life's long race;
Star of the evening! with thy tranquil rays,
Gladden the aged eyes that seek thy face.

IX.

"Hail sacred maid! thou brighter, better Eve,
Take from our eyes the blinding scales of sin;
Within our hearts no selfish poison leave,
For thou the heavenly antidote canst win.
O sacred Mother! 'tis to thee we run—
Poor children, from this world's oppressive strife;
Ask all we need from thy immortal Son,
Who drank of death, that we might taste of life.

X.

"Hail, spotless Virgin! mildest, meekest maid—
Hail! purest Pearl that time's great sea hath borne—
May our white souls, in purity arrayed,
Shine, as if they thy vestal robes had worn;
Make our hearts pure, as thou thyself art pure—
Make safe the rugged pathway of our lives,
And make us pass to joys that *will* endure
When the dark term of mortal life arrives[70]."

XI.

'Twas thus, in hymns, and prayers, and holy psalms,
Day tracking day, and night succeeding night,
Now driven by tempests, now delayed by calms,
Along the sea we winged our varied flight.
Oh! how we longed and pined for sight of land!
Oh! how we sighed for the green pleasant fields!
Compared with the cold waves, the barest strand—
The bleakest rock—a crop of comfort yields.

XII.

Sometimes, indeed, when the exhausted gale,
In search of rest, beneath the waves would flee,
Like some poor wretch, who, when his strength doth fail,
Sinks in the smooth and unsupporting sea.
Then would the Brothers draw from memory's store
Some chapter of life's misery or bliss—
Some trial that some saintly spirit bore—
Or else some tale of passion, such as this:

PART IV.

The Buried City[71].

I.

Beside that giant stream, that foams and swells
Betwixt Hy-Conaill and Moyarta's shore,
And guards the isle where good Senanus dwells[72],
A gentle maiden dwelt, in days of yore.
She long has passed out of Time's aching womb,
And breathes Eternity's favonian air;
Yet fond Tradition lingers o'er her tomb,
And paints her glorious features as they were:—

II.

Her smile was Eden's pure and stainless light,
Which never cloud nor earthly vapour mars;
Her lustrous eyes were like the noon of night—
Black, but yet brightened by a thousand stars;
Her tender form, moulded in modest grace,
Shrank from the gazer's eye, and moved apart;
Heaven shone reflected in her angel face,
And God reposed within her virgin heart.

III.

She dwelt in green Moyarta's pleasant land,
Beneath the graceful hills of Clonderlaw,—
Sweet sunny hills, whose triple summits stand,
One vast tiara over stream and shaw.
Almost in solitude the maiden grew,
And reached her early budding woman's prime;
And all so noiselessly the swift time flew,
She knew not of the name or flight of Time.

IV.

And thus, within her modest mountain nest,
This gentle maiden nestled like a dove,
Offering to God from her pure innocent breast
The sweet and silent incense of her love.
No selfish feeling nor presumptuous pride
In her calm bosom waged unnatural strife.
Saint of her home and hearth, she sanctified
The thousand trivial common cares of life.

V.

Upon the opposite shore there dwelt a youth,
Whose nature's woof was woven of good and ill—
Whose stream of life flowed to the sea of truth,
But in a devious course, round many a hill—
Now lingering through a valley of delight,
Where sweet flowers bloomed, and summer song-birds sung,
Now hurled along the dark tempestuous night,
With gloomy, treeless mountains overhung.

VI.

He sought the soul of Beauty throughout space;
Knowledge he tracked through many a vanished age:
For one he scanned fair Nature's radiant face,
And for the other, Learning's shrivelled page.
If Beauty sent some fair apostle down,
Or Knowledge some great teacher of her lore,
Bearing the wreath of rapture and the crown,
He knelt to love, to learn, and to adore.

VII.

Full many a time he spread his little sail,—
How rough the river, or how dark the skies,—
Gave his light corrach to the angry gale,
And crossed the stream, to gaze on Ethna's eyes.
As yet 'twas worship, more than human love—
That hopeless adoration that we pay
Unto some glorious planet throned above,
Though severed from its crystal sphere for aye.

VIII.

But warmer love an easy conquest won,
The more he came to green Moyarta's bowers;
Even as the earth, by gazing on the sun,
In summer-time puts forth her myriad flowers.
The yearnings of his heart—vague, undefined—
Wakened and solaced by ideal gleams,
Took everlasting shape, and intertwined
Around this incarnation of his dreams.

IX.

Some strange fatality restrained his tongue—
He spoke not of the love that filled his breast;
The thread of hope, on which his whole life hung,
Was far too weak to bear so strong a test.
He trusted to the future—time, or chance—
His constant homage, and assiduous care;
Preferred to dream, and lengthen out his trance,
Rather than wake to knowledge and despair.

X.

And thus she knew not, when the youth would look
Upon some pictured chronicle of eld,
In every blazoned letter of the book
One fairest face was all that he beheld:
And where the limner, with consummate art
Drew flowing lines and quaint devices rare,
The wildered youth, by looking from the heart,
Saw nought but lustrous eyes and waving hair.

XI.

He soon was startled from his dreams, for now—
'Twas said, obedient to a heavenly call—
His life of life would take the vestal vow,
In one short month, within a convent's wall.
He heard the tidings with a sickening fear,
But quickly had the sudden faintness flown,
And vowed, though heaven or hell should interfere,
Ethna—his Ethna—should be his alone!

XII.

He sought his boat, and snatched the feathery oar—
It was the first and brightest morn of May;
The white-winged clouds, that sought the northern shore,
Seemed but love's guides, to point him out the way.
The great old river heaved its mighty heart,
And, with a solemn sigh, went calmly on;
As if of all his griefs it felt a part,
But knew they should be borne, and so had gone.

XIII.

Slowly his boat the languid breeze obeyed,
Although the stream that that light burden bore
Was like the level path the angels made,
Through the rough sea, to Arran's blessed shore[73];
And from the rosy clouds the light airs fanned,
And from the rich reflection that they gave,
Like good Scothinus, had he reached his hand[74],
He might have plucked a garland from the wave.

XIV.

And now the noon in purple splendour blazed—
The gorgeous clouds in slow procession filed—
The youth leaned o'er with listless eyes and gazed,
Down through the waves on which the blue heavens smiled:
What sudden fear his gasping breath doth drown?
What hidden wonder fires his startled eyes?
Down in the deep, full many a fathom down,
A great and glorious city buried lies.

XV.

Not like those villages with rude-built walls,
That raise their humble roofs round every coast,
But holding marble basilics and halls,
Such as imperial Rome itself might boast.
There was the palace and the poor man's home,
And upstart glitter and old-fashioned gloom,
The spacious porch, the nicely rounded dome,
The hero's column, and the martyr's tomb.

XVI.

There was the cromleach with its circling stones;
There the green rath and the round narrow tower;
There was the prison whence the captive's groans
Had many a time moaned in the midnight hour.
Beneath the graceful arch the river flowed,
Around the walls the sparkling waters ran,
The golden chariot rolled along the road,—
All, all, was there except the face of man.

XVII.

The wondering youth had neither thought nor word,
He felt alone the power and will to die;
His little bark seemed like an outstretched bird,
Floating along that city's azure sky.
It was not that he was not bold and brave,
And yet he would have perished with affright,
Had not the breeze, rippling the lucid wave,
Concealed the buried city from his sight.

XVIII.

He reached the shore; the rumour was too true—
Ethna—his Ethna—would be God's alone
In one brief month; for which the maid withdrew,
To seek for strength before His blessed throne.
Was it the fire that on his bosom preyed?
Or the temptation of the Fiend abhorred?
That made him vow to snatch the white-veiled maid
Even from the very altar of her Lord!

XIX.

The first of June, that festival of flowers,
Came, like a goddess, o'er the meadows green!
And all the children of the spring-tide showers
Rose from their grassy beds to hail their Queen.
A song of joy, a pæan of delight,
Rose from the myriad life in the tall grass,
When the young Dawn, fresh from the sleep of night,
Glanced at her blushing face in Ocean's glass.

XX.

Ethna awoke—a second—brighter dawn—
Her mother's fondling voice breathed in her ear;
Quick from her couch she started, as a fawn
Bounds from the heather when her dam is near.
Each clasped the other in a long embrace—
Each knew the other's heart did beat and bleed—
Each kissed the warm tears from the other's face,
And gave the consolation she did need.

XXI.

Oh! bitterest sacrifice the heart can make—
That of a mother of her darling child—
That of a child, who, for her Saviour's sake,
Leaves the fond face that o'er her cradle smiled.
They who may think that God doth never need
So great, so sad a sacrifice as this,
While they take glory in their easier creed,
Will feel and own the sacrifice it is.

XXII.

All is prepared—the sisters in the choir —
The mitred abbot on his crimson throne—
The waxen tapers, with their pallid fire
Poured o'er the sacred cup and altar-stone—
The upturned eyes, glistening with pious tears—
The censer's fragrant vapour floating o'er.
Now all is hushed, for, lo! the maid appears,
Entering with solemn step the sacred door.

XXIII.

She moved as moves the moon, radiant and pale,
Through the calm night, wrapped in a silvery cloud;
The jewels of her dress shone through her veil,
As shine the stars through their thin vaporous shroud;
The brighter jewels of her eyes were hid
Beneath their smooth white caskets arching o'er,
Which, by the trembling of each ivory lid,
Seemed conscious of the treasures that they bore.

XXIV.

She reached the narrow porch and the tall door,
Her trembling foot upon the sill was placed—
Her snowy veil swept the smooth-sanded floor—
Her cold hands chilled the bosom they embraced.
Who is this youth, whose forehead, like a book,
Bears many a deep-traced character of pain?
Who looks for pardon as the damned may look—
That ever pray, and know they pray in vain.

XXV.

'Tis he, the wretched youth—the Demon's prey.
One sudden bound, and he is at her side—
One piercing shriek, and she has swooned away,
Dim are her eyes, and cold her heart's warm tide.
Horror and terror seize the startled crowd;
Their sinewy hands are nerveless with affright;
When, as the wind beareth a summer cloud,
The youth bears off the maiden from their sight.

XXVI.

Close to the place the stream rushed roaring by,
His little boat lay moored beneath the bank,
Hid from the shore, and from the gazer's eye,
By waving reeds and water-willows dank.
Hither, with flying feet and glowing brow,
He fled, as quick as fancies in a dream—
Placed the insensate maiden in the prow—
Pushed from the shore, and gained the open stream.

XXVII.

Scarce had he left the river's foamy edge,
When sudden darkness fell on hill and plain;
The angry Sun, shocked at the sacrilege,
Fled from the Heavens with all his golden train;
The stream rushed quicker, like a man afeared;
Down swept the storm and clove its breast of green,
And though the calm and brightness re-appeared
The youth and maiden never more were seen.

XXVIII.

Whether the current in its strong arms bore
Their bark to green Hy-Brasail's fairy halls,
Or whether, as is told along that shore,
They sunk within the buried city's walls;
Whether through some Elysian clime they stray,
Or o'er their whitened bones the river rolls;—
Whate'er their fate, my brothers, let us pray
To God, for peace and pardon to their souls.

XXIX.

Such was the brother's tale of earthly love—
He ceased, and sadly bowed his reverend head:
For us, we wept, and raised our eyes above,
And sang the *De Profundis* for the dead.
A freshening breeze played on our moistened cheeks,
The far horizon oped its walls of light,
And lo! with purple hills and sun-bright peaks
A glorious isle gleamed on our gladdened sight.

PART V.

The Paradise of Birds.

"Post resurrectionis diem dominicæ navigabitis ad altam insulam ad occidentalem plagam, que vocatur PARADISUS AVIUM."—LIFE OF ST. BRENDAN, IN CAPGRAVE, FOL. 45.

I.

It was the fairest and the sweetest scene—
The freshest, sunniest, smiling land that e'er
Held o'er the waves its arms of sheltering green
Unto the sea and storm-vexed mariner:—
No barren waste its gentle bosom scarred,
Nor suns that burn, nor breezes winged with ice,
Nor jagged rocks (Nature's grey ruins) marred
The perfect features of that Paradise.

II.

The verdant turf spreads from the crystal marge
Of the clear stream, up the soft-swelling hill,
Rose-bearing shrubs and stately cedars large
All o'er the land the pleasant prospect fill.
Unnumbered birds their glorious colours fling
Among the boughs that rustle in the breeze,
As if the meadow-flowers had taken wing
And settled on the green o'er-arching trees.

III.

Oh! Ita, Ita, 'tis a grievous wrong,
That man commits who uninspired presumes
To sing the heavenly sweetness of their song—
To paint the glorious tinting of their plumes—
Plumes bright as jewels that from diadems
Fling over golden thrones their diamond rays—
Bright, even as bright as those three mystic gems,
The angels bore thee in thy childhood's days[75].

IV.

There dwells the bird that to the farther west
Bears the sweet message of the coming spring[76];
June's blushing roses paint his prophet breast,
And summer skies gleam from his azure wing.
While winter prowls around the neighbouring seas,
The happy bird dwells in his cedar nest,
Then flies away, and leaves his favourite trees
Unto his brother of the graceful crest[77].

V.

Birds that with us are clothed in modest brown,
There wear a splendour words cannot express.
The sweet-voiced thrush beareth a golden crown[78],
And even the sparrow boasts a scarlet dress[79].
There partial Nature fondles and illumes
The plainest offspring that her bosom bears;
The golden robin flies on fiery plumes[80],
And the small wren a purple ruby wears[81].

L. of C.

VI.

Birds, too, that, even in our sunniest hours,
Ne'er to this cloudy land one moment stray,
Whose brilliant plumes, fleeting and fair as flowers,
Come with the flowers, and with the flowers decay[82].
The Indian bird, with hundred eyes, that throws
From his blue neck the azure of the skies,
And his pale brother of the northern snows,
Bearing white plumes, mirrored with brilliant eyes[83].

VII.

Oft, in the sunny mornings, have I seen
Bright-yellow birds, of a rich lemon hue,
Meetings in crowds upon the branches green,
And sweetly singing all the morning through[84];
And others, with their heads greyish and dark,
Pressing their cinnamon cheeks to the old trees,
And striking on the hard, rough, shrivelled bark,
Like conscience on a bosom ill at ease[85].

VIII.

And diamond birds chirping their single notes,
Now mid the trumpet-flower's deep blossoms seen,
Now floating brightly on with fiery throats,
Small-winged emeralds of golden green[86];
And other larger birds with orange cheeks,
A many-colour-painted chattering crowd,
Prattling for ever with their curved beaks,
And through the silent woods screaming aloud[87].

IX.

Colour and form may be conveyed in words,
But words are weak to tell the heavenly strains
That from the throats of these celestial birds
Rang through the woods and o'er the echoing plains:
There was the meadow-lark, with voice as sweet,
But robed in richer raiment than our own[88];
And as the moon smiled on his green retreat,
The painted nightingale sang out alone[89].

X.

Words cannot echo music's winged note,
One bird alone exhausts their utmost power;
'Tis that strange bird whose many-voicéd throat
Mocks all his brethren of the woodland bower—
To whom indeed the gift of tongues is given,
The musical rich tongues that fill the grove,
Now like the lark dropping his notes from heaven,
Now cooing the soft earth-notes of the dove[90].

XI.

Oft have I seen him, scorning all control,
Winging his arrowy flight rapid and strong,
As if in search of his evanished soul,
Lost in the gushing ecstasy of song[91];
And as I wandered on, and upward gazed,
Half lost in admiration, half in fear,
I left the brothers wondering and amazed,
Thinking that all the choir of Heaven was near.

XII.

Was it a revelation or a dream?—
That these bright birds as angels once did dwell
In Heaven with starry Lucifer supreme,
Half sinned with him, and with him partly fell;
That in this lesser paradise they stray,
Float through its air, and glide its streams along,
And that the strains they sing each happy day
Rise up to God like morn and even song[92].

PART VI.

The Promised Land[93].

I.

As on this world the young man turns his eyes,
When forced to try the dark sea of the grave,
Thus did we gaze upon that Paradise,
Fading, as we were borne across the wave.
And, as a brighter world dawns by degrees
Upon Eternity's serenest strand,
Thus, having passed through dark and gloomy seas,
At length we reached the long-sought Promised Land.

II.

The wind had died upon the Ocean's breast,
When, like a silvery vein through the dark ore,
A smooth bright current, gliding to the west,
Bore our light bark to that enchanted shore.
It was a lovely plain—spacious and fair,
And bless'd with all delights that earth can hold,
Celestial odours filled the fragrant air
That breathed around that green and pleasant wold.

III.

There may not rage of frost, nor snow, nor rain,
Injure the smallest and most delicate flower,
Nor fall of hail wound the fair, healthful plain,
Nor the warm weather, nor the winter's shower.
That noble land is all with blossoms flowered,
Shed by the summer breezes as they pass;
Less leaves than blossoms on the trees are showered,
And flowers grow thicker in the fields than grass[94].

IV.

Nor hills, nor mountains, there stand high and steep,
Nor stony cliffs tower o'er the frightened waves,
Nor hollow dells, where stagnant waters sleep,
Nor hilly risings, nor dark mountain caves;
Nothing deformed upon its bosom lies,
Nor on its level breast rests aught unsmooth,
But the noble field flourishes 'neath the skies,
Blooming for ever in perpetual youth.

V.

That glorious land stands higher o'er the sea,
By twelve-fold fathom measure, than we deem
The highest hills beneath the Heavens to be.
There the bower glitters, and the green woods gleam.
All o'er that pleasant plain, calm and serene,
The fruits ne'er fall, but, hung by God's own hand,
Cling to the trees, that stand for ever green,
Obedient to their Maker's first command.

VI.

Summer and winter are the woods the same,
Hung with bright fruits and leaves that never fade;
Such will they be, beyond the reach of flame,
Till Heaven and Earth and Time shall have decayed.
Here might Iduna in her fond pursuit,
As fabled by the northern sea-born men,
Gather her golden and immortal fruit,
That brings their youth back to the gods again[95].

VII.

Of old, when God, to punish sinful pride,
Sent round the deluged world the ocean flood,
When all the earth lay 'neath the vengeful tide,
This glorious land above the waters stood.
Such shall it be at last, even as at first,
Until the coming of the final doom,
When the dark chambers—men's death homes shall burst,—
And man shall rise to judgment from the tomb.

VIII.

There there is never enmity, nor rage,
Nor poisoned calumny, nor envy's breath,
Nor shivering poverty, nor decrepid age,
Nor loss of vigour, nor the narrow death,
Nor idiot laughter, nor the tears men weep,
Nor painful exile from one's native soil,
Nor sin, nor pain, nor weariness, nor sleep,
Nor lust of riches, nor the poor man's toil.

IX.

There never falls the rain cloud as with us,
Nor gapes the earth with the dry summer's thirst,
But liquid streams, wondrously curious,
Out of the ground with fresh fair bubblings burst.
Sea-cold and bright the pleasant waters glide
Over the soil, and through the shady bowers;
Flowers fling their coloured radiance o'er the tide,
And the bright streams their crystal o'er the flowers.

X.

Such was the land for Man's enjoyment made,
When from this troubled life his Soul doth wend:
Such was the land through which entranced we strayed,
For fifteen days, nor reached its bound nor end.
Onward we wandered in a blissfull dream,
Nor thought of food, nor needed earthly rest;
Until, at length, we reached a mighty stream,
Whose broad bright waves flowed from the east to west.

XI.

We were about to cross its placid tide,
When, lo! an Angel on our vision broke.
Clothed in white, upon the further side
He stood majestic, and thus sweetly spoke:
" Father, return, thy mission now is o'er;
God, who did call thee here, now bids thee go.
Return in peace unto thy native shore,
And tell the mighty secrets thou dost know.

XII.

"In after years, in God's own fitting time,
This pleasant land again shall re-appear;
And other men shall preach the truths sublime,
To the benighted people dwelling here.
But ere that hour this land shall all be made,
For mortal man, a fitting, natural home,
Then shall the giant mountain fling its shade,
And the strong rock stem the white torrent's foam.

XIII.

"Seek thy own isle—Christ's newly-bought domain,
Which Nature with an emerald pencil paints;
Such as it is, long, long shall it remain,
The school of Truth, the college of the Saints,
The student's bower, the hermit's calm retreat,
The stranger's home, the hospitable hearth,
The shrine to which shall wander pilgrim feet
From all the neighbouring nations of the earth.

XIV.

"But in the end upon that land shall fall
A bitter scourge, a lasting flood of tears,
When ruthless tyranny shall level all
The pious trophies of its early years:
Then shall this land prove thy poor country's friend,
And shine a second Eden in the west;
Then shall this shore its friendly arms extend,
And clasp the outcast exile to its breast."

XV.

He ceased, and vanished from our dazzled sight,
While harps and sacred hymns rang sweetly o'er;
For us again we winged our homeward flight
O'er the great ocean to our native shore;
And as a proof of God's protecting hand,
And of the wondrous tidings that we bear,
The fragrant perfume of that heavenly land
Clings to the very garments that we wear[96].

Ballads and Lyrics.

BALLADS AND LYRICS.

THE BRIDAL OF THE YEAR.

Aus niedrigen Hauser dumpfern Gemachern,
Aus Handwerk's und Gewerbesbanden
Aus dem Druck von Giebeln und Dachern
Aus dem Strassen quetschender Enge,
Aus der Kirchen ehrwundiger Nacht
Sind sie Alle ans Licht gebracht[97].

FAUST.

SWEET DAY, SO COOL, SO CALM, SO BRIGHT,
THE BRIDAL OF THE EARTH AND SKY.

GEORGE HERBERT.

I.

YES! the Summer is returning,
Warmer, brighter beams are burning;
Golden mornings, purple evenings,
  Come to glad the world once more.
Nature from her long sojourning
In the Winter-House of Mourning,
With the light of hope outpeeping,
From those eyes that late were weeping,
Cometh dancing o'er the waters
  To our distant shore.

On the boughs the birds are singing,
Never idle,
For the bridal
Goes the frolic breeze a-ringing
All the green bells on the branches,
Which the soul of man doth hear;
Music-shaken,
It doth waken,
Half in hope and half in fear,
And dons its festal garments for the Bridal of the Year!

II.

For the Year is sempiternal,
Never wintry, never vernal,
Still the same through all the changes
That our wondering eyes behold.
Spring is but his time of wooing—
Summer but the sweet renewing
Of the vows he utters yearly,
Ever fondly and sincerely,
To the young Bride that he weddeth,
When to heaven departs the old,
For it is her fate to perish,
Having brought him,
In the Autumn,
Children for his heart to cherish.
Summer, like a human mother,
Dies in bringing forth her young;
Sorrow blinds him,
Winter finds him
Childless, too, their graves among,
Till May returns once more, and bridal hymns are sung.

III.

Thrice the great Bethrothéd naming,
Thrice the mystic banns proclaiming,
February, March, and April,
Spread the tidings far and wide;
Thrice they questioned each new-comer,
"Know ye, why the sweet-faced Summer,
With her rich imperial dower,
Golden fruit and diamond flower,
And her pearly rain-drop trinkets,
Should not be the green Earth's Bride?"
All things vocal spoke elated
(Nor the voiceless
Did rejoice less)—
"Be the marriage consummated!"
All the many murmuring voices
Of the music-breathing Spring,
Young birds twittering,
Streamlets glittering,
Insects on transparent wing,—
All hailed the Summer nuptials of their King!

IV.

Now the rosy east gives warning,
'Tis the wished-for nuptial morning.
Sweetest truant from Elysium,
Golden morning of the May!
All the guests are in their places—
Lilies with pale, high-bred faces—

Hawthorns in white wedding favours,
Scented with celestial savours—
Daisies, like sweet country maidens,
Wear white scolloped frills to-day;
'Neath her hat of straw the Peasant
Primrose sitteth,
Nor permitteth
Any of her kindred present,
'Specially the milk-sweet cowslip,
E'er to leave the tranquil shade;
By the hedges,
Or the edges
Of some stream or grassy glade,
They look upon the scene half wistful, half afraid.

v.

Other guests, too, are invited,
From the alleys dimly lighted,
From the pestilential vapours
Of the over-peopled town—
From the fever and the panic,
Comes the hard-worked, swarth mechanic—
Comes his young wife, pallor-stricken
At the cares that round her thicken—
Comes the boy whose brow is wrinkled,
Ere his chin is clothed in down—
And the foolish pleasure-seekers,
Nightly thinking
They are drinking
Life and joy from poisoned beakers,
Shudder at their midnight madness,

And the raving revel scorn:
All are treading
To the wedding
In the freshness of the morn,
And feel, perchance too late, the bliss of being born.

VI.

And the Student leaves his poring,
And his venturous exploring
In the gold and gem-enfolding
Waters of the ancient lore—
Seeking in its buried treasures,
Means for life's most common pleasures;
Neither vicious nor ambitious—
Simple wants and simple wishes.
Ah! he finds the ancient learning
But the Spartan's iron ore;
Without value in an era
Far more golden
Than the olden—
When the beautiful chimera—
Love—hath almost wholly faded
Even from the dreams of men.
From his prison
Newly risen—
From his book-enchanted den—
The stronger magic of the morning drives him forth again.

VII.

And the Artist, too—the Gifted—
He whose soul is Heaven-ward lifted—

Till it drinketh inspiration
At the fountain of the skies;
He, within whose fond embraces
Start to life the marble graces;
Or, with God-like power presiding,
With the potent pencil gliding,
O'er the void chaotic canvass
Bids the fair creations rise!
And the quickened mass obeying
Heaves its mountains;
From its fountains
Sends the gentle streams a-straying
Through the vales, like Love's first feelings
Stealing o'er a maiden's heart;
The Creator—
Imitator—
From his easel forth doth start,
And from God's glorious Nature learns anew his Art!

VIII.

But who is this with tresses flowing,
Flashing eyes and forehead glowing,
From whose lips the thunder-music
Pealeth o'er the listening lands?
'Tis the first and last of preachers—
First and last of priestly teachers;
First and last of those appointed
In the ranks of the anointed;
With their songs like swords to sever
Tyranny and Falsehood's bands!

'Tis the Poet—sum and total
Of the others,
With his brothers,
In his rich robes sacerdotal,
Singing from his golden psalter.
Comes he now to wed the twain—
Truth and Beauty—
Rest and Duty—
Hope, and Fear, and Joy, and Pain,
Unite for weal or woe beneath the Poet's chain!

IX.

And the shapes that follow after,
Some in tears and some in laughter,
Are they not the fairy phantoms
In his glorious visions seen?
Nymphs from shady forests wending,
Goddesses from heaven descending;
Three of Jove's divinest daughters,
Nine from Aganippe's waters;
And the passion-immolated,
Too fond-hearted Tyrian Queen,
Various shapes of one idea,
Memory-haunting,
Heart-enchanting,
Cythna, Genevieve, and Nea[98];
Rosalind and all her sisters,
Born by Avon's sacred stream,
All the blooming
Shapes, illuming
"The Eternal Pilgrim's"[99] dream,
Follow the Poet's steps beneath the morning's beam.

X.

But the Bride—the Bride is coming!
Birds are singing, bees are humming;
Silent lakes amid the mountains
Look but cannot speak their mirth;
Streams go bounding in their gladness,
With a Bacchanalian madness;
Trees bow down their heads in wonder,
Clouds of purple part asunder,
As the Maiden of the Morning
Leads the blushing Bride to Earth!
Bright as are the planets seven—
With her glances
She advances,
For her azure eyes are Heaven!
And her robes are sun-beams woven,
And her beauteous bridesmaids are
Hopes and Wishes—
Dreams delicious—
Joys from some serener star,
And Heavenly-hued Illusions gleaming from afar!

XI.

Now the mystic right is over—
Blessings on the loved and lover!
Strike the tabours, clash the cymbals,
Let the notes of joy resound!
With the rosy apple blossom,
Blushing like a maiden's bosom;
With the cream-white clusters pearly
Of the pear-tree budding early;

With all treasures from the meadows
Strew the consecrated ground;
Let the guests with vows fraternal
Pledge each other,
Sister, brother,
With the wine of Hope—the vernal,
Vine-juice of Man's better nature—
Vintage of Man's trustful heart.
Perseverance
And Forbearance,
Love and Labour, Song and Art,
Be this the cheerful creed wherewith the world may start.

XII.

But whither have the twain departed?
The United—the One-hearted—
Whither from the bridal banquet
Have the Bride and Bridegroom flown?
Ah! their steps have led them quickly
Where the young leaves cluster thickly;
Blossomed boughs rain fragrance o'er them,
Greener grows the grass before them,
As they wander through the island,
Fond, delighted, and alone!
At their coming streams grow brighter,
Skies grow clearer,
Mountains nearer,
And the blue waves dancing lighter
From the far-off mighty ocean

Frolic on the glistening sand,
Jubilations—
Gratulations—
Breathe around, as hand in hand,
They roam by Sutton's sea-washed shore, or soft Shanganagh's strand.

THE PILGRIMS.

LOVE TOOK UP THE GLASS OF TIME AND TURNED IT IN HIS GLOWING HANDS,
EVERY MOMENT LIGHTLY SHAKEN RAN ITSELF IN GOLDEN SANDS.
TENNYSON.

I.

See yonder little lowly hut,
Begirt with fields of fresh-mown hay,
Whose friendly doorway, never shut,
Invites the passing beams to stay;
Upon its roof the wall-flower blooms,
With fragrant lip and tawny skin,
And through the porch the pea perfumes
The cooling breeze that enters in.

II.

Sweet-scented pearly hawthorn boughs
Are in the hedges all around;
Sweet, milky, fragrant, gentle cows
Are grazing o'er the dewy ground;

The rich laburnum's golden hair
O'erhangs the lilac's purple cheek,
While, stealing through the twilight air,
Their hives the honey plunderers seek.

III.

With fondest thoughts and heart-spun dreams,
Joy weaves around his magic woof,
For Love's first sweetest moonlight beams
Above this lowly cottage roof.
What need we tell how Owen sigh'd,
And Norah felt she knew not what?—
Enough, that, seated side by side,
They share this little lowly cot.

IV.

As thus beneath a willing chain
Their captive hearts exulting bound,
Two pilgrims from the distant plain
Come quickly o'er the mossy ground.
One is a Boy, with locks of gold
Thick curling round his face so fair;
The other Pilgrim, stern and old,
Has snowy beard and silver hair.

V.

The youth, with many a merry trick,
Goes singing on his careless way;
His old companion walks as quick,
But speaks no word by night or day.

Where'er the old man treads, the grass
Fast fadeth with a certain doom;
But where the beauteous boy doth pass
Unnumber'd flowers are seen to bloom.

VI.

And thus before the sage, the Boy
Trips lightly o'er the blooming lands,
And proudly bears a pretty toy—
A crystal glass with diamond sands.
A smile o'er any brow would pass,
To see him frolic in the sun—
To see him shake the crystal glass,
And make the sands more quickly run.

VII.

And now they leap the streamlet o'er,
A silver thread so white and thin,
And now they reach the open door,
And now they lightly enter in:—
"God save all here,"—that kind wish flies
Still sweeter from his lips so sweet;
"God save you kindly," Norah cries,
"Sit down, my child, and rest and eat."

VIII.

"Thanks, gentle Norah, fair and good,
We'll rest awhile our weary feet;
But, though this old man needeth food,
There's nothing here that he can eat.

His taste is strange, he eats alone,
Beneath some ruined cloister's cope,
Or on some tottering turret's stone,
While I can only live on—Hope!

IX.

"A week ago, ere you were wed—
It was the very night before—
Upon so many sweets I fed,
While passing by your mother's door,—
It was that dear, delicious hour
When Owen here the nosegay brought,
And found you in the woodbine bower,—
Since then, indeed, I've needed nought."

X.

A blush steals over Norah's face,
A smile comes over Owen's brow,
A tranquil joy illumes the place,
As if the moon were shining now;
The Boy beholds the pleasing pain,
The sweet confusion he has done,
And shakes the crystal glass again,
And makes the sands more quickly run.

XI.

"Dear Norah, we are pilgrims, bound
Upon an endless path sublime;
We pace the green earth round and round,
And mortals call us LOVE and TIME;

He seeks the many, I the few,—
I dwell with peasants, he with kings.
We seldom meet, but when we do,
I take his glass, and he my wings.

XII.

"And thus together on we go,
Where'er I chance or wish to lead;
And Time, whose lonely steps are slow,
Now sweeps along with lightning speed.
Now on our bright predestined way
We must to other regions pass;
But take this gift, and night and day
Look well upon its truthful glass.

XIII.

"How quick or slow the bright sands fall
Is hid from lovers' eyes alone,
If you can see them move at all,
Be sure your heart has colder grown.
'Tis coldness makes the glass grow dry,
The icy hand, the freezing brow;
But warm the heart and breathe the sigh,
And then they'll pass you know not how."

XIV.

She took the glass where Love's warm hands
A bright impervious vapour cast,
She looks, but cannot see the sands,
Although she feels they're falling fast.

But cold hours came, and then, alas!
She saw them falling frozen through,
Till Love's warm light suffused the glass,
And hid the loos'ning sands from view!

A LAMENT.

YA ESTA LLAMA SE DESATA,
YA CADUCA ESTE EDIFICIO,
YA SE DESMAYA ESTA FLOR.
CALDERON.

THE dream is over,
The vision has flown;
Dead leaves are lying
Where roses have blown;
Wither'd and strown
Are the hopes I cherished,—
All hath perished
But grief alone.

My heart was a garden
Where fresh leaves grew;
Flowers there were many,
And weeds a few;
Cold winds blew,
And the frosts came thither,
For flowers will wither,
And weeds renew!

Youth's bright palace
Is overthrown,
With its diamond sceptre
And golden throne;
As a time-worn stone
Its turrets are humbled,—
All hath crumbled
But grief alone!

Whither, oh! whither
Have fled away
The dreams and hopes
Of my early day?
Ruined and grey
Are the towers I builded;
And the beams that gilded—
Ah! where are they?

Once this world
Was fresh and bright,
With its golden noon
And its starry night;
Glad and light,
By mountain and river,
Have I bless'd the Giver
With hushed delight.

These were the days
Of story and song,
When Hope had a meaning
And Faith was strong.

"Life will be long,
And lit with Love's gleamings:"
Such were my dreamings,
But, ah! how wrong!

Youth's illusions,
One by one,
Have passed like clouds
That the sun looked on.
While morning shone,
How purple their fringes!
How ashy their tinges
When that was gone!

Darkness that cometh
Ere morn has fled—
Boughs that wither
Ere fruits are shed—
Death bells instead
Of a bridal's pealings—
Such are my feelings,
Since Hope is dead!

Sad is the knowledge
That cometh with years—
Bitter the tree
That is watered with tears;
Truth appears,
With his wise predictions,
Then vanish the fictions
Of boyhood's years.

As fire-flies fade
When the nights are damp—
As meteors are quenched
In a stagnant swamp—
Thus Charlemagne's camp,
Where the Paladins rally,
And the Diamond Valley,
And Wonderful Lamp,

And all the wonders
Of Ganges and Nile,
And Haroun's rambles,
And Crusoe's isle,
And Princes who smile
On the Genii's daughters
'Neath the Orient waters
Full many a mile,

And all that the pen
Of Fancy can write,
Must vanish
In manhood's misty light—
Squire and knight,
And damosel's glances,
Sunny romances
So pure and bright!

These have vanished,
And what remains?
Life's budding garlands
Have turned to chains—

Its beams and rains
Feed but docks and thistles,
And sorrow whistles
O'er desert plains!

The dove will fly
From a ruined nest—
Love will not dwell
In a troubled breast—
The heart has no zest
To sweeten life's dolor—
If Love, the Consoler,
Be not its guest!

The dream is over,
The vision has flown;
Dead leaves are lying
Where roses have blown;
Wither'd and strown
Are the hopes I cherished,—
All hath perished
But grief alone!

SUMMER LONGINGS.

LAS MANANAS FLORIDAS
DE ABRIL Y MAYO.
CALDERON.

Ah! my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the May—
Waiting for the pleasant rambles,
Where the fragrant hawthorn brambles,
With the woodbine alternating,
Scent the dewy way.
Ah! my heart is weary waiting,
Waiting for the May.

Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May—
Longing to escape from study,
To the young face fair and ruddy,
And the thousand charms belonging
To the summer's day.
Ah! my heart is sick with longing,
Longing for the May.

Ah! my heart is sore with sighing,
Sighing for the May—
Sighing for their sure returning,
When the summer beams are burning,

Hopes and flowers that dead or dying
All the winter lay.
Ah! my heart is sore with sighing.
Sighing for the May.

Ah! my heart is pained with throbbing,
Throbbing for the May—
Throbbing for the sea-side billows,
Or the water-wooing willows;
Where in laughing and in sobbing
Glide the streams away.
Ah! my heart, my heart is throbbing,
Throbbing for the May.

Waiting sad, dejected, weary,
Waiting for the May.
Spring goes by with wasted warnings,
Moon-lit evenings, sun-bright mornings;
Summer comes, yet dark and dreary
Life still ebbs away:
Man is ever weary, weary,
Waiting for the May!

THE SEASONS OF THE HEART.

The different hues that deck the earth
All in our bosoms have their birth;
'Tis not in blue or sunny skies,
'Tis in the heart the summer lies!
The earth is bright if that be glad,
Dark is the earth if that be sad;
And thus I feel each weary day—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

In vain, upon her emerald car,
Comes Spring, "the maiden from afar[100]"
And scatters o'er the woods and fields
The liberal gifts that nature yields;
In vain the buds begin to grow,
In vain the crocus gilds the snow;
I feel no joy though earth be gay—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

And when the Summer, like a bride,
Comes down to earth in blushing pride,
And from that union sweet are born
The fragrant flowers and waving corn,

I hear the hum of birds and bees,
I view the hills and streams and trees,
Yet vain the thousand charms of May—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

And when the Autumn crowns the year,
And ripened hangs the golden ear,
And luscious fruits of ruddy hue
The bending boughs are glancing through,
When yellow leaves from sheltered nooks
Come forth and try the mountain brooks,
Even then I feel, as there I stray—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

And when the Winter comes at length,
With swaggering gait and giant strength,
And with his strong arms in a trice
Binds up the streams in chains of ice,
What need I sigh for pleasures gone,
The twilight eve, the rosy dawn?
My heart is changed as much as they—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

Even now, when Summer lends the scene
Its brightest gold, its purest green,
Whene'er I climb the mountain's breast,
With softest moss and heath-flowers dress'd,
When now I hear the breeze that stirs
The golden bells that deck the furze,
Alas! unprized they pass away—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

But when thou comest back once more,
Though dark clouds hang and loud winds roar,
And mists obscure the nearest hills,
And dark and turbid roll the rills,
Such pleasures then my breast shall know,
That summer's sun shall round me glow;
Then through the gloom shall gleam the May—
'Tis winter all when thou'rt away!

KATE OF KENMARE.

I.

Oh! many bright eyes full of goodness and gladness,
Where the pure soul looks out, and the heart loves to shine,
And many cheeks pale with the soft hue of sadness,
Have I worshipped in silence and felt them divine!
But Hope in its gleamings, or love in its dreamings,
Ne'er fashioned a being so faultless and fair
As the lily-cheeked beauty, the rose of the Roughty,
The fawn of the valley, sweet Kate of Kenmare!

II.

It was all but a moment, her radiant existence,
Her presence, her absence, all crowded on me;
But time has not ages and earth has not distance
To sever, sweet vision, my spirit from thee!

Again am I straying where children are playing,
Bright is the sunshine and balmy the air,
Mountains are heathy, and there do I see thee,
Sweet fawn of the valley, young Kate of Kenmare!

III.

Thy own bright arbutus hath many a cluster
Of white waxen blossoms like lilies in air;
But, oh! thy pale cheek hath a delicate lustre,
No blossoms can rival, no lily doth wear;
To that cheek softly flushing, to thy lip brightly blushing,
Oh! what are the berries that bright tree doth bear?
Peerless in beauty, that rose of the Roughty,
That fawn of the valley, sweet Kate of Kenmare!

IV.

Oh! beauty, some spell from kind Nature thou bearest,
Some magic of tone or enchantment of eye,
That hearts that are hardest, from forms that are fairest,
Receive such impressions as never can die!
The foot of the fairy, though lightsome and airy,
Can stamp on the hard rock the shape it doth wear,
Art cannot trace it nor ages efface it,
And such are thy glances, sweet Kate of Kenmare![101]

V.

To him who far travels how sad is the feeling,
How the light of his mind is o'ershadowed and dim,
When the scenes he most loves, like a river's soft stealing,
All fade as a vision and vanish from him!

Yet he bears from each far land a flower for that garland
That memory weaves of the bright and the fair;
While this sigh I am breathing my garland is wreathing,
And the rose of that garland is Kate of Kenmare.

VI.

In lonely Lough Quinlan in summer's soft hours,
Fair islands are floating that move with the tide,
Which, sterile at first, are soon covered with flowers,
And thus o'er the bright waters fairy-like glide[102].
Thus the mind the most vacant is quickly awakened,
And the heart bears a harvest that late was so bare,
Of him who in roving finds objects of loving,
Like the fawn of the valley, sweet Kate of Kenmare!

VII.

Sweet Kate of Kenmare! though I ne'er may behold thee,
Though the pride and the joy of another you be,
Though strange lips may praise thee and strange arms enfold thee,
A blessing, dear Kate, be on them and on thee!
One feeling I cherish that never can perish—
One talisman proof to the dark wizard care—
The fervent and dutiful love of the Beautiful,
Of which thou art a type, gentle Kate of Kenmare!

DEVOTION.

When I wander by the ocean,
When I view its wild commotion,
Then the spirit of devotion
  Cometh near;
But it fills my brain and bosom,
  Like a fear!

I fear its booming thunder,
Its terror and its wonder,
Its icy waves, that sunder
  Heart from heart;
And the white host that lies under
  Makes me start!

Its clashing and its clangour
Proclaim the Godhead's anger—
I shudder, and with languor
  Turn away;
No joyance fills my bosom
  For that day!

When I wander through the valleys,
When the evening zephyr dallies,
And the light expiring rallies
  In the stream,
That spirit comes and glads me,
  Like a dream!

The blue smoke upward curling,
The silver streamlet purling,
The meadow wild flowers furling
Their leaflets to repose,—
All woo me from the world
And its woes!

The evening bell that bringeth
A truce to toil outringeth,
No sweetest bird that singeth
Half so sweet,
Not even the lark that springeth
From my feet!

Then see I God beside me,
The sheltering trees that hide me,
The mountains that divide me
From the sea,—
All prove how kind a Father
He can be.

Beneath the sweet moon shining
The cattle are reclining,
No murmur of repining
Soundeth sad;
All feel the present Godhead,
And are glad!

With mute unvoiced confessings,
To the giver of all blessings
I kneel, and with caressings
Press the sod,
And thank my Lord and Father,
And my God!

THE VALE OF SHANGÁNAH[103].

When I have knelt in the temple of Duty,
Worshipping honour and valour and beauty—
When, like a brave man, in fearless resistance,
I have fought the good fight on the field of existence;
When a home I have won in the conflict of labour,
With truth for my armour and thought for my sabre,
Be that home a calm home where my old age may rally,
A home full of peace in this sweet pleasant valley!
Sweetest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
Greenest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
May the accents of love, like the droppings of manna,
Fall sweet on my heart in the Vale of Shanganah!

Fair is this isle—this dear child of the ocean—
Nurtured with more than a mother's devotion;
For see! in what rich robes has Nature arrayed her,
From the waves of the west to the cliffs of Ben Heder,
By Glengariff's lone islets—Loch Lene's fairy water,
So lovely was each, that then matchless I thought her;
But I feel, as I stray through each sweet-scented alley,
Less wild but more fair is this soft verdant valley!
Sweetest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
Greenest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
No wide-spreading prairie—no Indian savannah,
So dear to the eye as the Vale of Shanganah!

How pleased, how delighted, the rapt eye reposes
On the picture of beauty this valley discloses,
From that margin of silver, whereon the blue water
Doth glance like the eyes of the ocean foam's daughter!
To where, with the red clouds of morning combining,
The tall "Golden Spears" o'er the mountains are shining,
With the hue of their heather, as sunlight advances,
Like purple flags furled round the staffs of the lances!
Sweetest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
Greenest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
No lands far away by the calm Susquehannah,
So tranquil and fair as the Vale of Shanganah!

But here, even here, the lone heart were benighted,
No beauty could reach it, if love did not light it;
'Tis this makes the Earth, oh! what mortal can doubt it?
A garden with *it*, but a desert without it!
With the lov'd one, whose feelings instinctively teach her,
That goodness of heart makes the beauty of feature,
How glad, through this vale, would I float down life's river,
Enjoying God's bounty, and blessing the Giver!
Sweetest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
Greenest of vales is the Vale of Shanganah!
May the accents of love, like the droppings of manna,
Fall sweet on my heart in the Vale of Shanganah!

THE PILLAR TOWERS OF IRELAND.

I.

The pillar towers of Ireland, how wondrously they stand
By the lakes and rushing rivers through the valleys of our land;
In mystic file, through the isle, they lift their heads sublime,
These grey old pillar temples—these conquerors of time!

II.

Beside these grey old pillars, how perishing and weak
The Roman's arch of triumph, and the temple of the Greek,
And the gold domes of Byzantium, and the pointed Gothic spires,
All are gone, one by one, but the temples of our sires!

III.

The column, with its capital, is level with the dust,
And the proud halls of the mighty and the calm homes of the just;
For the proudest works of man, as certainly, but slower,
Pass like the grass at the sharp scythe of the mower!

IV.

But the grass grows again when in majesty and mirth,
On the wing of the Spring comes the Goddess of the Earth;
But for man in this world no springtide e'er returns
To the labours of his hands or the ashes of his urns!

V.

Two favourites hath Time—the pyramids of Nile,
And the old mystic temples of our own dear isle;
As the breeze o'er the seas, where the halcyon has its nest,
Thus Time o'er Egypt's tombs and the temples of the West!

VI.

The names of their founders have vanished in the gloom,
Like the dry branch in the fire or the body in the tomb;
But to-day, in the ray, their shadows still they cast—
These temples of forgotten Gods—these relics of the past!

VII.

Around these walls have wandered the Briton and the Dane—
The captives of Armorica, the cavaliers of Spain—
Phœnician and Milesian, and the plundering Norman Peers—
And the swordsmen of brave Brian, and the chiefs of later years!

VIII.

How many different rites have these grey old temples known?
To the mind what dreams are written in these chronicles of stone!
What terror and what error, what gleams of love and truth,
Have flashed from these walls since the world was in its youth?

IX.

Here blazed the sacred fire, and, when the sun was gone,
As a star from afar to the traveller it shone;
And the warm blood of the victim have these grey old temples drunk,
And the death-song of the Druid and the matin of the Monk.

X.

Here was placed the holy chalice that held the sacred wine,
And the gold cross from the altar, and the relics from the shrine,
And the mitre shining brighter with its diamonds than the East,
And the crozier of the Pontiff and the vestments of the Priest!

XI.

Where blazed the sacred fire, rung out the vesper bell,—
Where the fugitive found shelter, became the hermit's cell;
And hope hung out its symbol to the innocent and good,
For the Cross o'er the moss of the pointed summit stood!

XII.

There may it stand for ever, while this symbol doth impart
To the mind one glorious vision, or one proud throb to the heart;
While the breast needeth rest may these grey old temples last,
Bright prophets of the future, as preachers of the past!

OVER THE SEA.

Sad eyes! why are ye steadfastly gazing
Over the sea?
Is it the flock of the Ocean-shepherd grazing
Like lambs on the lea?—
Is it the dawn on the orient billows blazing
Allureth ye?

Sad heart! why art thou tremblingly beating—
What troubleth thee?
There where the waves from the fathomless water come greeting,
Wild with their glee!
Or rush from the rocks, like a routed battalion retreating,
Over the sea!

Sad feet! why are ye constantly straying
Down by the sea?
There, where the winds in the sandy harbour are playing
Child-like and free,
What is the charm, whose potent enchantment obeying,
There chaineth ye?

Oh! sweet is the dawn, and bright are the colours it glows in!
Yet not to me!
To the beauty of God's bright creation my bosom is frozen!
Nought can I see!
Since *she* has departed—the dear one, the loved one, the chosen,
Over the sea!

Pleasant it was when the billows did struggle and wrestle,
Pleasant to see!
Pleasant to climb the tall cliffs where the sea birds nestle,
When near to thee!
Nought can I now behold but the track of thy vessel
Over the sea!

Long as a Lapland winter, which no pleasant sunlight cheereth,
The summer shall be:
Vainly shall autumn be gay, in the rich robes it weareth,
Vainly for me!
No joy can I feel till the prow of thy vessel appeareth
Over the sea!

Sweeter than summer, which tenderly, motherly bringeth
Flowers to the bee!
Sweeter than autumn, which bounteously, lovingly flingeth
Fruits on the tree!
Shall be winter, when homeward returning, thy swift vessel wingeth
Over the sea!

OH! HAD I THE WINGS OF A BIRD.

Oh! had I the wings of a bird,
To soar through the blue sunny sky,
By what breeze would my pinions be stirred?
To what beautiful land would I fly?
Would the gorgeous East allure,
With the light of its golden eves,
Where the tall green palm, over isles of balm
Waves with its feath'ry leaves?
Ah! no! no! no!
I heed not its tempting glare;
In vain would I roam from my island home,
For skies more fair!

Would I seek a southern sea,
Italia's shore beside,
Where the clustering grape from tree to tree
Hangs in its rosy pride?

My truant heart be still,
For I long have sighed to stray
Through the myrtle flowers of fair Italy's bowers,
By the shores of its southern bay.
But no! no! no!
Though bright be its sparkling seas,
I never would roam from my island home,
For charms like these!

Would I seek that land so bright,
Where the Spanish maiden roves,
With a heart of love and an eye of light,
Through her native citron groves?
Oh! sweet would it be to rest
In the midst of the olive vales,
Where the orange blooms and the rose perfumes
The breath of the balmy gales!
But no! no! no!—
Though sweet be its wooing air!
I never would roam from my island home
To scenes though fair!

Would I pass from pole to pole?
Would I seek the western skies,
Where the giant rivers roll,
And the mighty mountains rise?
Or those treacherous isles that lie
In the midst of the sunny deeps,
Where the cocoa stands on the glistening sands,
And the dread tornado sweeps!

Ah! no! no! no!
They have no charms for me;
I never would roam from my island home,
Though poor it be!

Poor!—oh! 'tis rich in all
That flows from Nature's hand.
Rich in the emerald wall
That guards its emerald land!
Are Italy's fields more green?
Do they teem with a richer store
Than the bright green breast of the Isle of the West,
And its wild luxuriant shore?
Ah! no! no! no!
Upon it Heaven doth smile.
Oh! I never would roam from my native home,
My own dear isle!

LOVE'S LANGUAGE.

WHEN WORDS WE WANT, LOVE TEACHES TO INDITE,
AND WHAT WE BLUSH TO SPEAK, SHE BIDS US WRITE.

WIT'S RECREATIONS.

NEED I say how much I love thee?—
Need my weak words tell,
That I prize but heaven above thee,
Earth not half as well?

If this truth has failed to move thee,
Hope away must flee;
If thou dost not feel I love thee,
Vain my words would be!

Need I say how long I've sought thee?—
Need my words declare,
Dearest, that I long have thought thee
Good, and wise, and fair?
If no sigh this truth has brought thee,
Wo, alas! to me;
Where thy own heart has not taught thee,
Vain my words would be!

Need I say when others wooed thee,
How my breast did pine,
Lest some fond heart that pursued thee
Dearer wert than mine?
If no pity then came to thee,
Mixed with love for me,
Vainly would my words imbue thee,
Vain my words would be!

Love's best language is unspoken,
Yet how simply known;
Eloquent is every token,
Look, and touch, and tone.
If thy heart hath not awoken
If not yet on thee
Love's sweet silent light hath broken,
Vain my words would be!

Yet, in words of truest meaning,
Simple, fond, and few;
By the wild waves intervening,
Dearest, I love you!
Vain the hopes my heart is gleaning!
If, long since to thee,
My fond heart required unscreening,
Vain my words will be!

THE FIRESIDE.

I HAVE tasted all life's pleasures, I have snatched at all its joys,
The dance's merry measures and the revel's festive noise;
Though wit flash'd bright the live-long night, and flowed the ruby tide,
I sighed for thee, I sighed for thee, my own fireside!

In boyhood's dreams I wandered far, across the ocean's breast,
In search of some bright earthly star, some happy isle of rest;
I little thought the bliss I sought in roaming far and wide,
Was sweetly centred all in thee, my own fireside!

How sweet to turn at evening's close from all our cares away,
And end in calm, serene repose, the swiftly passing day!
The pleasant books, the smiling looks of sister or of bride,
All fairy ground doth make around one's own fireside!

"My Lord" would never condescend to honour my poor hearth;
"His Grace" would scorn a host or friend of mere plebeian birth;
And yet the lords of human kind, whom man has deified,
For ever meet in converse sweet around my fireside!

The poet sings his deathless songs, the sage his lore repeats,
The patriot tells his country's wrongs, the chief his warlike feats;
Though far away may be their clay, and gone their earthly pride,
Each godlike mind in books enshrined still haunts my fireside.

Oh! let me glance a moment through the coming crowd of years,
Their triumphs or their failures, their sunshine or their tears,
How poor or great may be my fate, I care not what betide,
So peace and love but hallow thee, my own fireside!

Still let me hold the vision close, and closer to my sight;
Still, still, in hopes elysian, let my spirit wing its flight;
Still let me dream, life's shadowy stream may yield from out its tide,
A mind at rest, a tranquil breast, a quiet fireside!

THE BANISHED SPIRIT'S SONG.

Beautiful clime, where I've dwelt so long,
In mirth and music, in gladness and song!
Fairer than aught upon earth art thou,—
Beautiful clime, must I leave thee now?

No more shall I join the circle bright
Of my sister nymphs, when they dance at night
In their grottos cool and their pearly halls,
When the glow-worm hangs on the ivy walls!

No more shall I glide o'er the waters blue,
With a crimson shell for my light canoe,
Or a rose-leaf plucked from the neighbouring trees,
Piloted o'er by the flower-fed breeze!

Oh! must I leave those spicy gales,
Those purple hills and those flowery vales?
Where the earth is strewed with pansy and rose,
And the golden fruit of the orange grows!

Oh! must I leave this region fair,
For a world of toil and a life of care?
In its dreary paths how long must I roam,
Far away from my fairy home?

The song of birds and the hum of bees,
And the breath of flowers, are on the breeze;
The purple plum and the cone-like pear,
Drooping, hang in the rosy air!

The fountains scatter their pearly rain
On the thirsty flowers, and the ripening grain;
The insects sport in the sunny beam,
And the golden fish in the laughing stream.

The Naiads dance by the river's edge,
On the low, soft moss and the bending sedge;
Wood-nymphs and satyrs and graceful fawns
Sport in the woods on the grassy lawns!

The slanting sunbeams tip with gold
The emerald leaves in the forests old,—
But I must away from this fairy scene,
Those leafy woods and those valleys green[104]!

REMEMBRANCE !

With that pleasant smile thou wearest,
Thou art gazing on the fairest
  Wonders of the earth and sea;
Do thou not, in all thy seeing,
Lose the mem'ry of one being
  Who at home doth think of thee.

In the capital of nations,
Sun of all earth's constellations,
  Thou art roaming glad and free;
Do thou not, in all thy roving,
Lose the mem'ry of one loving
  Heart at home that beats for thee.

Stranger eyes around thee glisten,
To a strange tongue thou dost listen,
  Strangers bend the suppliant knee;
Do thou not, for all their seeming
Truth, forget the constant beaming
  Eyes at home that watch for thee.

Stately palaces surround thee,
Royal parks and gardens bound thee—
  Gardens of the Fleur de Lis;
Do thou not, for all their splendour,
Quite forget the humble, tender
  Thoughts at home, that turn to thee.

When, at length of absence weary,
When the year grows sad and dreary,
And an east wind sweeps the sea;
Ere the days of dark November,
Homeward turn, and then remember
Hearts at home that pine for thee!

THE CLAN OF MAC CAURA[105].

Oh! bright are the names of the chieftains and sages,
That shine like the stars through the darkness of ages,
Whose deeds are inscribed on the pages of story,
There for ever to live in the sunshine of glory,
Heroes of history, phantoms of fable,
Charlemagne's champions, and Arthur's Round Table;
Oh! but they all a new lustre could borrow
From the glory that hangs round the name of Mac Caura!

Thy waves, Manzanares, wash many a shrine,
And proud are the castles that frown o'er the Rhine,
And stately the mansions whose pinnacles glance
Through the elms of Old England and vineyards of France;
Many have fallen, and many will fall,
Good men and brave men have dwelt in them all,
But as good and as brave men, in gladness and sorrow,
Have dwelt in the halls of the princely Mac Caura!

Montmorency, Medina, unheard was thy rank
By the dark-eyed Iberian and light-hearted Frank,
And your ancestors wandered, obscure and unknown,
By the smoth Guadalquiver and sunny Garonne.
Ere Venice had wedded the sea, or enrolled
The name of a Doge in her proud "Book of Gold[106];"
When her glory was all to come on like the morrow,
There were chieftains and kings of the clan of Mac Caura!

Proud should thy heart beat, descendant of Heber[107],
Lofty thy head as the shrines of the Guebre,
Like them are the halls of thy forefathers shattered,
Like their's is the wealth of thy palaces scattered.
Their fire is extinguished—your flag long unfurled—
But how proud were ye both in the dawn of the world!
And should both fade away, oh! what heart would not sorrow
O'er the towers of the Guebre—the name of Mac Caura!

What a moment of glory to cherish and dream on,
When far o'er the sea came the ships of Heremon,
With Heber, and Ir, and the Spanish patricians,
To free Inis-Fail from the spells of magicians.
Oh! reason had these for their quaking and pallor,
For what magic can equal the strong sword of valour?
Better than spells are the axe and the arrow,
When wielded or flung by the hand of Mac Caura[108]!

From that hour a Mac Caura had reigned in his pride
O'er Desmond's green valleys and rivers so wide,
From thy waters, Lismore, to the torrents and rills
That are leaping for ever down Brandon's brown hills;

The billows of Bantry, the meadows of Bear,
The wilds of Evaugh, and the groves of Glancare,
From the Shannon's soft shores to the banks of the Barrow,
All owned the proud sway of the princely Mac Caura!

In the house of Miodchuart[109], by princes surrounded,
How noble his step when the trumpet was sounded,
And his clansmen bore proudly his broad shield before him,
And hung it on high in that bright palace o'er him;
On the left of the monarch the chieftain was seated,
And happy was he whom his proud glances greeted:
'Mid monarchs and chiefs at the great Fes of Tara,
Oh! none was to rival the princely Mac Caura!

To the halls of the Red Branch, when conquest was o'er,
The champions their rich spoils of victory bore[110],
And the sword of the Briton, the shield of the Dane,
Flashed bright as the sun on the walls of Eamhain;
There Dathy and Niall bore trophies of war,
From the peaks of the Alps and the waves of the Loire[111];
But no knight ever bore from the hills of Ivaragh
The breast-plate or axe of a conquered Mac Caura!

In chasing the red deer what step was the fleetest?—
In singing the love song what voice was the sweetest?—
What breast was the foremost in courting the danger?—
What door was the widest to shelter the stranger?—
In friendship the truest, in battle the bravest,
In revel the gayest, in council the gravest?—
A hunter to-day and a victor to morrow?—
Oh! who but a chief of the princely Mac Caura!

But, oh! proud Mac Caura, what anguish to touch on
The one fatal stain of thy princely escutcheon;
In thy story's bright garden the one spot of bleakness,
Through ages of valour the one hour of weakness!
Thou, the heir of a thousand chiefs, sceptred and royal—
Thou to kneel to the Norman and swear to be loyal!
Oh! a long night of horror, and outrage, and sorrow,
Have we wept for thy treason, base Diarmid Mac Caura![112]

Oh! why, ere you thus to the foreigner pandered,
Did you not bravely call round your emerald standard,
The chiefs of your house of Lough Lene and Clan Awley
O'Donogh, Mac Patrick, O'Driscoll, Mac Awley,
O'Sullivan More, from the towers of Dunkerron,
And O'Mahon, the chieftain of green Ardinterran?
As the sling sends the stone, or the bent bow the arrow,
Every chief would have come at the call of Mac Caura?

Soon, soon, didst thou pay for that error in woe—
Thy life to the Butler—thy crown to the foe—
Thy castles dismantled, and strewn on the sod,
And the homes of the weak, and the abbeys of God!
No more in thy halls is the wayfarer fed,
Nor the rich mead sent round, nor the soft heather spread,
Nor the *clairsech's* sweet notes, now in mirth, now in sorrow,—
All, all have gone by, but the name of Mac Caura!

Mac Caura, the pride of thy house is gone by,
But its name cannot fade, and its fame cannot die,
Though the Arigideen, with its silver waves, shine[113]
Around no green forests or castles of thine,—

Though the shrines that you founded no incense doth hallow,
Nor hymns float in peace down the echoing Allo[114],
One treasure thou keepest, one hope for the morrow,—
True hearts yet beat of the clan of Mac Caura!

THE WINDOW.

Nach ihr nur schau' ich
Zum Fenster hinaus,
Nach ihr nur geh' ich
Aus dem Haus.
FAUST.

At my window, late and early,
In the sunshine and the rain,
When the jocund beams of morning
Come to wake me from my napping,
With their golden fingers tapping
At my window pane:
From my troubled slumbers flitting—
From my dreamings fond and vain,
From the fever intermitting,
Up I start, and take my sitting
At my window pane:—

Through the morning, through the noontide,
Fettered by a diamond chain,
Through the early hours of evening,
When the stars begin to tremble,
As their shining ranks assemble
O'er the azure plain:

When the thousand lamps are blazing
Through the street and lane—
Mimic stars of man's upraising—
Still I linger, fondly gazing
From my window pane!

For, amid the crowds slow passing,
Surging like the main,
Like a sunbeam among shadows,
Through the storm-swept cloudy masses,
Sometimes one bright being passes
'Neath my window pane:
Thus a moment's joy I borrow
From a day of pain.
See, she comes! but, bitter sorrow!
Not until the slow to-morrow,
Will she come again.

AUTUMN FEARS.

The weary, dreary, dripping rain,
From morn till night, from night till morn,
Along the hills and o'er the plain,
Strikes down the green and yellow corn;
The flood lies deep upon the ground,
No ripening heat the cold sun yields,
And rank and rotting lies around
The glory of the summer fields!

How full of fears, how racked with pain,
How torn with care, the heart must be,
Of him who sees his golden grain
Laid prostrate thus o'er lawn and lea;
For all that nature doth desire,
All that the shivering mortal shields,
The Christmas fare, the winter's fire,
All come from out the summer fields.

I too have strayed in pleasing toil
Along youth's fair and fertile meads;
I too within Hope's genial soil
Have, trusting, placed Love's golden seeds;
I too have feared the chilling dew,
The heavy rain when thunder pealed,
Lest Fate might blight the flower that grew
For me in Hope's green summer field.

Ah! who can paint that beauteous flower,
Thus nourished by celestial dew,
Thus growing fairer, hour by hour,
Delighting more, the more it grew;
Bright'ning, not burdening the ground,
Nor proud with inward worth concealed,
But scattering all its fragrance 'round
Its own sweet sphere, its summer field!

At morn the gentle flower awoke,
And raised its happy face to God;
At evening, when the starlight broke,
It bending sought the dewy sod;

And thus at morn, and thus at even,
In fragrant sighs its heart revealed,
Thus seeking heaven, and making heaven
Within its own sweet summer field!

Oh! joy beyond all human joy!
Oh! bliss beyond all earthly bliss!
If pitying Fate will not destroy
My hopes of such a flower as this!
How happy, fond, and heaven-possest,
My heart will be to tend and shield,
And guard upon my grateful breast
The pride of that sweet summer field!

FATAL GIFTS.

MUSE! CONTEMPLE TA VICTIME!
LAMARTINE.

THE Poet's heart is a fatal boon,
And fatal his wondrous eye,
And the delicate ear,
So quick to hear,
Over the earth and sky,
Creation's mystical tune!
Soon, soon, but not too soon,

Does that ear grow deaf, and that eye grow dim,
And Nature becometh a waste for him,
Whom, born for another sphere,
Misery hath shipwrecked here!

For what availeth his sensitive heart
For the struggle and stormy strife
That the mariner-man,
Since the world began,
Has braved on the sea of life?
With fearful wonder his eye doth start,
When it should be fixed on the outspread chart
That pointeth the way to golden shores—
Rent are his sails, and broken his oars,
And he sinks without hope or plan,
With his floating caravan.

And love, that should be his strength and stay,
Becometh his bane full soon,
Like flowers that are born
Of the beams at morn,
But die of their heat ere noon.
Far better the heart were the sterile clay,
Where the shining sands of the desert play,
And where never the perishing flow'ret gleams,
Than the heart that is fed with its wither'd dreams,
And whose love is repelled with scorn,
Like the bee by the rose's thorn.

SWEET MAY.

THE Summer is come!—the Summer is come!
With its flowers and its branches green,
Where the young birds chirp on the blossoming boughs,
And the sun-light struggles between;
And like children over the earth and sky
The flowers and the light clouds play;
But never before to my heart or eye
Came there ever so sweet a May
As this—
Sweet May! sweet May!

Oh! many a time have I wandered out
In the youth of the opening year,
When Nature's face was fair to my eye,
And her voice was sweet to my ear!
When I numbered the daisies, so few and shy,
That I met in my lonely way;
But never before to my heart or eye
Came there ever so sweet a May
As this—
Sweet May! sweet May!

If the flowers delayed, or the beams were cold,
Or the blossoming trees were bare,
I had but to look in the Poet's book,
For the Summer is always there!

But the sunny page I now put by,
And joy in the darkest day!
For never before, to my heart or eye,
Came there ever so sweet a May
As this—
Sweet May! sweet May!

For, ah! the belovéd at length has come,
Like the breath of May from afar;
And my heart is lit with her gentle eyes,
As the Heavens by the evening star.
'Tis this that brightens the darkest sky,
And lengthens the faintest ray,
And makes me feel that to heart or eye
There was never so sweet a May
As this—
Sweet May! sweet May!

National Poems and Songs.

NATIONAL POEMS AND SONGS[115].

ADVANCE!

God bade the Sun with golden step sublime
Advance!
He whispered in the listening ear of Time,
Advance!
He bade the guiding spirits of the Stars,
With lightning speed, in silver shining cars,
Along the bright floor of his azure hall,
Advance!
Sun, Stars, and Time, obey the voice, and all
Advance!

The River at its bubbling fountain cries
Advance!
The Clouds proclaim, like heralds through the skies,
Advance!
Throughout the world the mighty Master's laws
Allow not one brief moment's idle pause.
The Earth is full of life, the swelling seeds
Advance!
And Summer hours, like flowery harnessed steeds,
Advance!

To Man's most wondrous hand the same voice cried,
Advance!
Go clear the woods, and o'er the bounding tide
Advance!
Go draw the marble from its secret bed,
And make the cedar bend its giant head;
Let domes and columns through the wondering air
Advance!
The World, O Man! is thine. But wouldst thou share—
Advance!

Unto the soul of man the same voice spoke,
Advance!
From out the chaos, thunder-like, it broke,
"Advance!
Go track the comet in its wheeling race,
And drag the lightning from its hiding-place;
From out the night of ignorance and fears,
Advance!
For Love and Hope, borne by the coming years,
Advance!"

All heard, and some obeyed the great command,
Advance!
It passed along from listening land to land,
Advance!
The strong grew stronger, and the weak grew strong,
As passed the war-cry of the World along—
Awake, ye nations, know your powers and rights—
Advance!
Through Hope and Work to Freedom's new delights—
Advance!

Knowledge came down and waved her steady torch,
Advance!
Sages proclaimed 'neath many a marble porch,
Advance!
As rapid lightning leaps from peak to peak,
The Gaul, the Goth, the Roman, and the Greek,
The painted Briton, caught the wingéd word,
Advance!
And earth grew young, and carolled as a bird,
Advance!

Oh! Ireland—oh! my country, wilt thou not
Advance?
Wilt thou not share the world's progressive lot?
Advance!
Must seasons change, and countless years roll on,
And thou remain a darksome Ajalon?[116]
And never see the crescent moon of Hope
Advance?
'Tis time thine heart and eye had wider scope—
Advance!

Dear brothers, wake! look up! be firm! be strong!
Advance!
From out the starless night of fraud and wrong
Advance!
The chains have fall'n from off thy wasted hands,
And every man a seeming freedman stands;
But ah! 'tis in the soul that freedom dwells,—
Advance!
Proclaim that *there* thou wearest no manacles,—
Advance!

Advance! thou must advance or perish now,—
Advance!
Advance! Why live with wasted heart and brow?
Advance!
Advance! or sink at once into the grave;
Be bravely free or artfully a slave!
Why fret thy master, if thou must have one?
Advance!
"Advance three steps, the glorious work is done"[117]—
Advance!

The first is COURAGE—'tis a giant stride!
Advance!
With bounding step up Freedom's rugged side
Advance!
KNOWLEDGE will lead ye to the dazzling heights,
TOLERANCE will teach and guard your brother's rights.
Faint not! for thee a pitying Future waits—
Advance!
Be Wise, be Just, with will as fixed as Fate's,
Advance!

1846.

REMONSTRANCE.

Bless the dear old verdant land!
Brother, wert thou born of it?
As thy shadow life doth stand,
Twining round its rosy band,
Did an Irish mother's hand
Guide thee in the morn of it?
Did thy father's soft command
Teach thee love or scorn of it?

Thou who tread'st its fertile breast,
Dost thou feel a glow for it?
Thou, of all its charms possest,
Living on its first and best,
Art thou but a thankless guest,
Or a traitor foe for it?
If thou lovest, where the test?
Wouldst thou strike a blow for it?

Has the past no goading sting
That can make thee rouse for it?
Does thy land's reviving spring,
Full of buds and blossoming,

Fail to make thy cold heart cling,
  Breathing lover's vows for it?
With the circling ocean's ring
  Thou wert made a spouse for it!

Hast thou kept, as thou shouldst keep,
  Thy affections warm for it,
Letting no cold feeling creep,
Like the ice breath o'er the deep
Freezing to a stony sleep
  Hopes the heart would form for it—
Glories that like rainbows weep
  Through the darkening storm for it?

What we seek is Nature's right—
  Freedom and the aids of it;
Freedom for the mind's strong flight,
Seeking glorious shapes star-bright
Through the world's intensest night,
  When the sunshine fades of it!
Truth is one, and so is Light,
  Yet how many shades of it!

A mirror every heart doth wear,
  For heavenly shapes to shine in it;
If dim the glass or dark the air,
That Truth, the beautiful and fair,
God's glorious image, shine not there,
Or shine with nought divine in it,—
A sightless lion in its lair,
  The darkened soul must pine in it!

Son of this old down-trodden land,
Then aid us in the fight for it;
We seek to make it great and grand,
Its shipless bays, its naked strand,
By canvass-swelling breezes fanned.
Oh! what a glorious sight for it!
The past expiring like a brand,
In morning rosy light for it!

Think that this dear old land is thine,
And thou a traitor slave of it,—
Think how the Switzer leads his kine,
When pale the evening star doth shine,—
His song has home in every line,
Freedom in every stave of it!
Think how the German loves his Rhine,
And worships every wave of it!

Our own dear land is bright as their's,
But oh! our hearts are cold for it;
Awake! we are not slaves but heirs;
Our fatherland requires our cares,
Our work with Man, with God our prayers.
Spurn blood-stained Judas-gold for it—
Let us do all that honour dares—
Be earnest, faithful, bold for it!

1844.

INVOCATION.

Come! Liberty, come! we are ripe for thy coming—
Come freshen the hearts where thy rival has trod—
Come, richest and rarest!—come, purest and fairest!—
Come, daughter of science!—come, gift of the God!

Long, long have we sighed for thee, coyest of maidens—
Long, long have we worshipped thee, queen of the brave!
Steadily sought for thee, readily fought for thee,
Purpled the scaffold and glutted the grave!

On went the fight through the cycle of ages,
Never our battle-cry ceasing the while;
Forward, ye valiant ones! onward, battalioned ones!
Strike for your Erin, your own darling isle!

Still in the ranks are we, struggling with eagerness,
Still in the battle for Freedom are we!
Words may avail in it—swords if they fail in it,
What matters the weapon, if only we're free?

Oh! we are pledged in the face of the universe,
Never to falter and never to swerve;
Toil for it!—bleed for it!—if there be need for it,
Stretch every sinew and strain every nerve!

Traitors and cowards our names shall be ever,
If for a moment we turn from the chase;
For ages exhibited, scoffed at, and gibbeted,
As emblems of all that was servile and base!

Irishmen! Irishmen! think what is Liberty,
Fountain of all that is valued and dear,
Peace and security, knowledge and purity,
Hope for hereafter and happiness here.

Nourish it, treasure it deep in your inner heart,
Think of it ever by night and by day;
Pray for it!—sigh for it!—work for it!—die for it!
What is this life and dear freedom away?

List! scarce a sound can be heard in our thoroughfares—
Look! scarce a ship can be seen on our streams;
Heart-crushed and desolate, spell-bound, irresolute,
Ireland but lives in the by-gone of dreams!

Irishmen! if we be true to our promises,
Nerving our souls for more fortunate hours,
Life's choicest blessings, love's fond caressings,
Peace, home, and happiness—all shall be ours!

1844.

A DREAM.

I DREAMT a dream, a dazzling dream, of a green isle far away,
Where the glowing west to the ocean's breast calleth the dying day;
And that island green was as fair a scene as ever man's eye did see,
With its chieftains bold and its temples old, and its homes and its altars free!
No foreign foe did that green isle know, no stranger band it bore,
Save the merchant train from sunny Spain, and from Afric's golden shore!
And the young man's heart would fondly start, and the old man's eye would smile,
As their thoughts would roam o'er the ocean foam to that lone and "holy isle!"

Years passed by, and the orient sky blazed with a new-born light,
And Bethlehem's star shone bright afar o'er the lost world's darksome night;
And the diamond shrines from plundered mines, and the golden fanes of Jove,
Melted away in the blaze of day at the simple spell-word—Love!

The light serene o'er that island green played with its saving beams,
And the fires of Baal waxed dim and pale like the stars in the morning streams!
And 'twas joy to hear, in the bright air clear, from out each sunny glade,
The tinkling bell, from the quiet cell, or the cloister's tranquil shade!

A cloud of night o'er that dream so bright soon with its dark wing came,
And the happy scene of that island green was lost in blood and shame;
For its kings unjust betrayed their trust, and its queens, though fair, were frail,
And a robber band, from a stranger land, with their war-whoops filled the gale;
A fatal spell on that green isle fell, a shadow of death and gloom
Passed withering o'er, from shore to shore, like the breath of the foul simoom;
And each green hill's side was crimson dyed, and each stream rolled red and wild,
With the mingled blood of the brave and good—of mother and maid and child!

Dark was my dream, though many a gleam of hope through that black night broke,
Like a star's bright form through a whistling storm, or the moon through a midnight oak!

And many a time, with its wings sublime, and its robes of saffron light,
Would the morning rise on the eastern skies, but to vanish again in night!
For, in abject prayer, the people there still raised their fettered hands,
When the sense of right and the power to smite are the spirit that commands;
For those who would sneer at the mourner's tear, and heed not the suppliant's sigh,
Would bow in awe to that first great law, a banded nation's cry!

At length arose o'er that isle of woes a dawn with a steadier smile,
And in happy hour a voice of power awoke the slumbering isle!
And the people all obeyed the call of their chief's unsceptred hand,
Vowing to raise, as in ancient days, the name of their own dear land!
My dream grew bright as the sunbeam's light, as I watched that isle's career,
Through the varied scene and the joys serene of many a future year;
And, oh! what a thrill did my bosom fill, as I gazed on a pillared pile,
Where a senate once more in power watched o'er the rights of that lone green isle!

1843.

THE PRICE OF FREEDOM.

MAN of Ireland, heir of sorrow,
Wronged, insulted, scorned, oppressed,
Wilt thou never see that morrow
When thy weary heart may rest?
Lift thine eyes, thou outraged creature;
Nay, look up, for Man thou art,
Man in form and frame and feature,
Why not act Man's god-like part?

Think, reflect, inquire, examine,
Is it for this God gave you birth—
With the spectre look of famine,
Thus to creep along the earth?
Does this world contain no treasures
Fit for thee, as Man, to wear?—
Does this life abound in pleasures,
And thou askest not to share?

Look! the nations are awaking,
Every chain that bound them burst!
At the crystal fountains slaking
With parched lips their fever thirst!
Ignorance the demon, fleeing,
Leaves unlocked the fount they sip;
Wilt thou not, thou wretched being,
Stoop and cool thy burning lip?

History's lessons, if thou'lt read 'em,
All proclaim this truth to thee:
Knowledge is the price of freedom,
Know thyself, and thou art free!
Know, O man! thy proud vocation,
Stand erect, with calm, clear brow—
Happy! happy were our nation,
If thou hadst that knowledge now!

Know thy wretched, sad condition,
Know the ills that keep thee so;
Knowledge is the sole physician,
Thou wert healed if thou didst know!
Those who crush, and scorn, and slight thee,
Those to whom you once would kneel,
Were the foremost then to right thee,
If thou felt as thou shouldst feel!

Not as beggars lowly bending,
Not in sighs, and groans, and tears,
But a voice of thunder sending
Through thy tyrant brother's ears!
Tell him he is not thy master,
Tell him of man's common lot,
Feel life has but one disaster,
To be a slave, and know it not!

If thou knew what knowledge giveth,
If thou knew how blest is he
Who in Freedom's presence liveth,
Thou wouldst die, or else be free!

Round about he looks in gladness,
Joys in heaven, and earth, and sea,
Scarcely heaves a sigh of sadness,
Save in thoughts of such as thee!

1843.

THE VOICE AND PEN.

Oh! the Orator's voice is a mighty power,
As it echoes from shore to shore,
And the fearless pen has more sway o'er men
Than the murderous cannon's roar!
What burst the chain far over the main,
And brightens the captive's den?
'Tis the fearless pen and the voice of power,
Hurrah! for the Voice and Pen!
Hurrah!
Hurrah! for the voice and pen!

The tyrant knaves who deny Man's rights,
And the cowards who blanch with fear,
Exclaim with glee—"No arms have ye,
Nor cannon, nor sword, nor spear!
Your hills are our's, with our forts and towers
We are masters of mount and glen!"
Tyrants beware! for the arms we bear
Are the Voice and the fearless Pen!
Hurrah!
Hurrah! for the voice and pen!

Though your horsemen stand with their bridles in hand,
And your sentinels walk around!
Though your matches flare in the midnight air,
And your brazen trumpets sound!
Oh! the orator's tongue shall be heard among
These listening warrior men;
And they'll quickly say—"Why should we slay
Our friends of the Voice and Pen?"
Hurrah!
Hurrah! for the voice and pen!

When the Lord created the earth and sea,
The stars and the glorious sun,
The Godhead spoke, and the universe woke!
And the mighty work was done!
Let a word be flung from the orator's tongue,
Or a drop from the fearless pen,
And the chains accursed asunder burst
That fettered the minds of men!
Hurrah!
Hurrah for the Voice and Pen!

Oh! these are the swords with which we fight,
The arms in which we trust,
Which no tyrant hand will dare to brand,
Which time cannot dim or rust!
When these we bore we triumphed before,
With these we'll triumph again!
And the world will say no power can stay
The Voice and the fearless Pen!
Hurrah!
Hurrah! for the voice and pen!

1844.

"CEASE TO DO EVIL—LEARN TO DO WELL"[118].

Oh! thou whom sacred duty hither calls,
Some glorious hours in freedom's cause to dwell,
Read the mute lesson on thy prison walls,
"Cease to do evil— learn to do well."

If haply thou art one of genius vast,
Of generous heart, of mind sublime and grand,
Who all the spring-time of thy life hast pass'd
Battling with tyrants for thy native land,—
If thou hast spent thy summer as thy prime,
The serpent brood of bigotry to quell,—
Repent, repent thee of thy hideous crime,
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

If thy great heart beat warmly in the cause
Of outraged man, whate'er his race might be,—
If thou hast preached the Christian's equal laws,
And stayed the lash beyond the Indian sea!—
If at thy call a Nation rose sublime,
If at thy voice seven million fetters fell,—
Repent, repent thee of thy hideous crime,
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

If thou hast seen thy country's quick decay,
And, like a prophet, raised thy saving hand,—
And pointed out the only certain way
To stop the plague that ravaged o'er the land!—
If thou hast summoned from an alien clime
Her banished senate here at home to dwell,
Repent, repent thee of thy hideous crime,
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

Or if, perchance, a younger man thou art,
Whose ardent soul in throbbings doth aspire,
Come weal, come woe, to play the patriot's part
In the bright footsteps of thy glorious sire!—
If all the pleasures of life's youthful time
Thou hast abandoned for the martyr's cell,—
Do thou repent thee of thy hideous crime,
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

Or art thou one whom early science led
To walk with Newton through the immense of Heaven,
Who soared with Milton, and with Mina bled,
And all thou hadst in freedom's cause hath given?
Oh! fond enthusiast—in the after time
Our children's children of your worth shall tell—
England proclaims thy honesty a crime,
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

Or art thou one whose strong and fearless pen
Roused the Young Isle, and bade it dry its tears,
And gathered round thee ardent, gifted men,
The hope of Ireland in the coming years?—

Who dares in prose and heart-awakening rhyme,
Bright hopes to breathe and bitter truths to tell?—
Oh! dangerous criminal, repent thy crime,
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

"Cease to do evil"—ay! ye madmen, cease!
Cease to love Ireland—cease to serve her well;
Make with her foes a foul and fatal peace,
And quick will ope your darkest, dreariest cell.
"Learn to do well"—ay! learn to betray—
Learn to revile the land in which you do dwell—
England will bless you on your altered way—
"Cease to do evil—learn to do well!"

1844.

A NEW YEAR'S SONG.

My countrymen, awake! arise!
Our work begins anew,
Your mingled voices rend the skies,
Your hearts are firm and true,
You've bravely marched, and nobly met,
Our little green isle through;
But, oh! my friends, there's something yet
For Irishmen to do!

As long as Erin hears the clink
Of base ignoble chains,
As long as one detested link
Of foreign rule remains,
As long as of our rightful debt
One smallest fraction's due,
So long, my friends, there's something yet
For Irishmen to do!

Too long we've borne the servile yoke,—
Too long the slavish chain,—
Too long in feeble accents spoke,
And ever spoke in vain.—
Our wealth has filled the spoiler's net,
And gorg'd the Saxon crew.
But, oh! my friends, we'll teach them yet
What Irishmen can do!

The olive branch is in our hands,
The white flag floats above;
Peace, peace pervades our myriad bands,
And proud forgiving love.
But, oh! let not our foes forget
We're Men, as Christians too,
Prepared to do for Ireland yet
What Irishmen should do!

There's not a man of all our land
Our country now can spare,
The strong man with his sinewy hand,
The weak man with his prayer!

No whining tone of mere regret,
Young Irish bards, for you;
But let your songs teach Ireland yet
What Irishmen should do!

And wheresoe'er that duty lead,
There, there your post should be;
The coward slave is never freed,
The brave alone are free!
Oh! Freedom, firmly fixed are set
Our longing eyes on you;
And though we die for Ireland yet
So Irishmen should do!

1844.

THE LIVING LAND.

We have mourned and sighed for our buried pride,
We have given what Nature gives,
A manly tear o'er a brother's bier,
But now for the Land that lives!
He who passed too soon, in his glowing noon,
The hope of your youthful band
From heaven's blue wall doth seem to call
"Think! think of your Living Land!
I dwell serene in a happier scene—
Ye dwell in a Living Land!"

Yes! yes! dear shade, thou shalt be obeyed,
We must spend the hour that flies,
In no vain regret for the sun that has set,
But in hope for another to rise;
And though it delay with its guiding ray,
We must each, with his little brand,
Like sentinels light through the dark, dark night,
The steps of our Living Land.
She needeth our care in the chilling air—
Our old, dear Living Land!

Yet our breasts will throb, and the tears will throng
To our eyes for many a day,
For an eagle in strength and a lark in song
Was the spirit that's pass'd away.
Though his heart be still as a frozen rill,
And pulseless his glowing hand,
We must struggle the more for that old green shore
He was making a Living Land.
By him we have lost, at whatever the cost,
She must be a Living Land!

A Living Land such as Nature plann'd,
When she hollowed our harbours deep,
When she bade the grain wave over the plain,
And the oak wave over the steep:
When she bade the tide roll deep and wide
From its source to the ocean strand,
Oh! it was not to slaves she gave these waves,
But to sons of a Living Land!
Sons who have eyes and hearts to prize
The worth of a Living Land!

Oh! when shall we lose the hostile hues,
That have kept us so long apart?
Or cease from the strife, that is crushing the life
From out of our mother's heart?
Could we lay aside our doubts and our pride
And join in a common band,
One hour would see our country free,
A young and a Living Land!
With a nation's heart and a nation's part,
A free and a Living Land![119]

1845.

THE DEAD TRIBUNE.

——————— WHILE THE TREE
OF FREEDOM'S WITHER'D TRUNK PUTS FORTH A LEAF,
EVEN FOR THY TOMB A GARLAND LET IT BE,
THE FORUM'S CHAMPION AND THE PEOPLE'S CHIEF.

BYRON.

The awful shadow of a Great Man's death
Falls on this land, so sad and dark before,—
Dark with the famine and the fever breath,
And mad dissensions knawing at its core.
Oh! let us hush foul discord's maniac roar,
And make a mournful truce, however brief,
Like hostile armies when the day is o'er!—
And thus devote the night-time of our grief
To tears and prayers for him, the Great Departed Chief.

In "Genoa the Superb" O'Connell dies—
That city of Columbus by the sea,
Beneath the canopy of azure skies,
As high and cloudless as his fame must be.
Is it mere chance or higher destiny
That brings these names together? One, the bold
Wanderer in ways that none had trod but he—
The other, too, exploring paths untold;
One a new world would seek, and one would save the old!

With child-like incredulity we cry—
It cannot be that great career is run,
It cannot be but in the eastern sky
Again will blaze that mighty world-watch'd sun!
Ah! fond deceit! the east is dark and dun,
Death's black impervious cloud is on the skies;
Toll the deep bell, and fire the evening gun,
Let honest sorrow moisten manly eyes:
A glorious sun has set that never more shall rise!

Brothers, who struggle yet in Freedom's van,
Where'er your forces o'er the world are spread,
The last great Champion of the Rights of Man—
The last great Tribune of the World is dead!
Join in our grief, and let our tears be shed
Without reserve or coldness on his bier;
Look on his life as on a map outspread—
His fight for freedom—freedom far and near—
And if a speck should rise, oh! hide it with a tear!

To speak his praises little need have we—
  To tell the wonders wrought within these waves;
Enough, so well he taught us to be free,
  That even to him we could not kneel as slaves.
Oh! let our tears be fast-destroying graves,
  Where doubt and difference may for ever lie,
Buried and hid as in sepulchral caves;
  And let love's fond and reverential eye
Alone behold the star new risen in the sky!

But can it be, that well-known form is stark?
  Can it be true, that burning heart is chill?
Oh! can it be that twinkling eye is dark?
  And that great thunder voice is hush'd and still?
Never again upon the famous hill
  Will he preside as Monarch of the Land,
With myriad myriads subject to his will;
  Never again shall raise that powerful hand,
To rouse, to warm, to check, to kindle, and command!

The twinkling eye, so full of changeful light,
  Is dimmed and darkened in a dread eclipse;
The withering scowl—the smile so sunny bright,
  Alike have faded from his voiceless lips.
The words of power, the mirthful merry quips,
  The mighty onslaught, and the quick reply,
The biting taunts that cut like stinging whips,
  The homely truth—the lessons grave and high,
All—all are with the past, but cannot, shall not die!

1847.

A MYSTERY.

THEY are dying! they are dying! where the golden corn is growing—
They are dying! they are dying! where the crowded herds are lowing—
They are gasping for existence where the streams of life are flowing,
And they perish of the plague where the breeze of health is blowing!

God of Justice! God of Power!
Do we dream? Can it be?
In this land, at this hour,
With the blossom on the tree,
In the gladsome month of May,
When the young lambs play,—
When Nature looks around
On her waking children now,
The seed within the ground,
The bud upon the bough?
Is it right, is it fair,
That we perish of despair
In this land, on this soil,
Where our destiny is set,
Which we cultured with our toil,
And watered with our sweat?

We have plough'd, we have sown,
But the crop was not our own;
We have reaped, but harpy hands
Swept the harvest from our lands;
We were perishing for food,
When lo! in pitying mood,
Our kindly rulers gave
The fat fluid of the slave,
While our corn filled the manger
Of the war-horse of the stranger!

God of Mercy! must this last?
Is this land pre-ordained
For the present and the past,
And the future, to be chained,—
To be ravaged, to be drained,
To be robbed, to be spoiled,
To be hushed, to be whipt,
Its soaring pinions clipt,
And its every effort foiled?

Do our numbers multiply
But to perish and to die?
Is this all our destiny below,
That our bodies, as they rot,
May fertilize the spot
Where the harvests of the stranger grow?

If this be, indeed, our fate,
Far, far better now, though late,
That we seek some other land and try some other zone;

The coldest, bleakest shore
Will surely yield us more
Than the store-house of the stranger that we dare not call our own.

Kindly brothers of the West,
Who from Liberty's full breast
Have fed us, who are orphans beneath a step-dame's frown,
Behold our happy state,
And weep your wretched fate
That you share not in the splendours of our empire and our crown!

Kindly brothers of the East,—
Thou great tiara'd priest,
Thou sanctified Rienzi of Rome and of the earth,—
Or thou who bear'st control
Over golden Istambol,
Who felt for our misfortunes and helped us in our dearth,—

Turn here your wondering eyes,
Call your wisest of the wise,
Your Muftis and your Ministers, your men of deepest lore,
Let the sagest of your sages
Ope our island's mystic pages,
And explain unto your Highness the wonders of our shore.

A fruitful teeming soil,
Where the patient peasants toil
Beneath the summer's sun and the watery winter sky,—
Where they tend the golden grain
Till it bends upon the plain,
Then reap it for the stranger, and turn aside to die.

Where they watch their flocks increase,
And store the snowy fleece,
'Till they send it to their masters to be woven o'er the waves;
Where, having sent their meat
For the foreigner to eat,
Their mission is fulfilled, and they creep into their graves[120].

'Tis for this they are dying where the golden corn is growing,
'Tis for this they are dying where the crowded herds are lowing,
'Tis for this they are dying where the streams of life are flowing,
And they perish of the plague where the breeze of health is blowing.

1847.

GOD BLESS THE TURK[121].

"Whoever believes in God and the day of resurrection must respect his guest"[122].
MAHOMED.

God bless the Turk! God bless the Turk!
God bless the Turk! for this Christian work,—
May his noble shadow never be less!
May Mahomed guard him,
And Allah reward him,
And Suleyman bless him,
And the Houris caress him,

When with years o'erladen,
To the bowers of Adhan,
His spirit in soaring
Shall hover adoring,
And rest with the lowly,
And kneel with the holy,
Who kiss the beryl
And moon-white pearl
Of the never-ending
Bright steps ascending
Up to the nighest
Abode of the Highest,
In the infinite calm, in the clear serene,
Where the feet of God's wonderful Throne are seen!

In the name of God the most Merciful!
In the name of God the Compassionate!
Let us bless the good Sultân!—
He has guarded from danger
The brave-hearted Stranger—
He has stretched out his hand
To the chief of the band,
To the noble Kossuth!
Who from God's high commission,
Not for gold or ambition—
Less a lord than a lover—
Ruled royally over
His dear native land
With the sceptre of Truth;
O Prince of the Faithful!
From all that is scathful

Protect that dear life!
By his old mother's fears,
By his young children's tears,
By the anguish that lies
In the heart and the eyes
Of his desolate wife!—
By the land that he ruled,
By the people he schooled,
By the lessons he taught,
By the battles he fought,—
Guard him and keep him
By every endeavour.
The universe round
With a shriek shall resound,
It shall wail him and weep him,
And curse you for ever,
If you murder its hope,
If he cometh to harm.
Guard him and keep him
From chain and from charm,
From the hangman's rope
And the headsman's arm,
From the serpent snare
And the panting pursuit,
From the Russian bear
And the Austrian brute;
'Till the danger is past,
And the storm has o'er blown—
'Till safety's frail seed
Securely is cast,
And the harvest hath grown—

In the hour of his need
Be his kind host—afar
From the blood-seeking Czar,
Whom may Azrael blast
On his skull-builded throne!

In the name of God the Compassionate!
In the name of God the Most Merciful!
Let us help the good Sultân!
Let the Cross be uplifted,
The banners outspread,
Let the people be sifted,
Let the noble and gifted
Appear at their head!
With a million Crusaders,
Like those famed in story,
Let Europe advance,
And repel the invaders
Back, back, to their haunts!
Till their snows be made gory
Like lightning-lit foam!
Let recreant France
See and win back the glory
She squandered in Rome!
Let England the Strong,
With her hatred of wrong,
With the true strength that calms,
And with spirit elateful,
Be first on the road!
Let Ireland be grateful,
And pay back the alms
That his Highness bestowed!

Let the hearts of the peoples
Be stirred with emotion,
All over the West;
Let the belfries and steeples
Rock and reel like the ocean
In eternal unrest!
By the Rhine and the Rhone—
'Neath the bright Spanish skies—
By the Thames and the Tiber—
Like a giant awoken,
New-nerved with young fibre,
Let the people arise!
By the Seine and the Shannon
Let discord be dumb—
Let the silence be broken
By the thunder alone
Of the red roaring cannon
And heart-stirring drum!
For the battle that loometh—
The warfare that cometh—
The red fires that gleam—
The flight and pursuing—
The wrath and the ruin,
Are more than we dream!

Fire the guns! ring the bells—
Woe! woe!—for the war
'Twixt the Porte and the Czar
In the blue Dardanelles
Is the long-threatened fight
Of the Wrong with the Right—

Of Justice with Might—
Of the Day with the Night—
Of the Wreath and the Cord—
Of the Ploughshare and Sword—
Of the Slave with his Rod—
Of Darkness and Light—
Of the Devil and God!

1849.

THE VOICE IN THE DESERT.

Oh! my country—oh! my Erin,
Once so gladsome, once so gay,
Must thou, slowly disappearing,
Vanish from the face of day?
Will the angry Godhead grant us
Nought from thee except a grave?
Thou, alas! a true Atlantis
Sinking down in ruin's wave!

He enslaveth—who delivers,
And the hand doth smite that shields—
Erin of the fishful rivers—
Erin of the golden fields—
Strange her destiny, but stranger,
If the just God could forgive
Her who gave unto the stranger
What should make her children live!

But why use this nomenclature?
Why the frank avowal shun?
Dare to blame not God or Nature,
For what we ourselves have done.
Blame not God's benign intentions,
Nor the wily statesman's snares;
Let us blame our mad dissensions,
Boasts and brawls and braggart airs!

Let us make the sad confession
And the bitter fruit bewail,
It was partly indiscretion,
Partly caution, made us fail[123]:
Some too slow, and some too rapid,
Some too timid, some too bold,
Some too volatile or vapid,—
And the tragic tale is told!

But, whate'er the cause, 'tis over,
And the sad result remains;
Desolation's wing doth hover
Daily darklier o'er our plains;
Save the buried and the banished,
Nought to ponder proudly o'er;
What was Ireland hath evanished,
What was Irish is no more!

Who shall guide us?—who shall save us?—
Break our chains?—unbind our cords?
Cold the burning heart of Davis,
Hush'd O'Connell's thunder-words;

Gone the Nobly-rash, Bold-spoken—
He, with danger first to cope;
Ah! "our ranks *are* thinn'd and broken"—
Who remains to give us hope?

Oh! Ierne, oh! ill-omened
Mother, rend thy tresses grey,
Wail the noblest heir of Thomond,
Wifeless, childless, borne away!
Look athwart the watery Lybian
Waste, and yonder captives wail;
There the golden-tongued young Tribune
And his brave companions sail!

Oh! our sad, our painful story,
What can equal? what can rival?
Gone the Island's ancient glory,
Gone the dreams of its revival.
Mute the clairseach that had woken
Hopes and tears and throbs and sighs;
For, with heart and harp-strings broken,
The Prince of all the Minstrels lies![124]

Still the old material Island
Looks as fertile, smiles as fair,
As when Baal-fires lit the highland,
And the bell-towers tolled to prayer.
'Mid the upland meads expanding,
See the hopeful peasant walks,
See the girdled sheaves are standing
Grain-filled 'mid the golden stalks.

The Isle's vitality astounds us,
As smiles upon a death-face traced—
For, ah! the desert that surrounds us
Spreads darkly round—a moral waste.
The faith, the hope, the trust that lighted
Our footsteps on for many a day—
These, with our very hearts, are blighted,
And, withering, waste and fade away.

From out that desert, where the Gifted
Dreamed verdurous isle and halls of gold;
Still from that desert is uplifted,
A Warning Voice, like that of old:
"God hath this punishment permitted
For what we've done, and left undone:—
Repent ye, of the sins committed,
And freedom's kingdom may be won!"

1849.

Miscellaneous Poems.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

AFGHANISTAN.

On Fancy's wing when favoured poets rise,
Burst from the earth, and soar amid the skies,
Attending spirits through the realms of light
Nerve their strong wings, and guide their daring flight;
A thousand zephyrs fan the favouring airs,
Venus her doves and pearly chariot shares:
But when a feebler bard essays to fly,
No friendly goddess wafts him through the sky.
Born of the earth, along the earth he creeps,
Knows his own sphere, and shuns the azure deeps.
'Tis thus, alas! with humbly-breathing lay,
Down the dim vales I wend my lowly way.
In vain the timid throbbings of my breast
Prompt me to rise and flutter with the rest.
What dewy Dryad of the greenwood shade,
What sportive sylph, in rainbow hues arrayed,
What shepherd-queen of pastoral vale or hill,
Nymph of the fount, or Naiad of the rill,

Would from their grottos heed my trembling sighs,
Tune my rude harp, and lift me to the skies?
What classic Muse would deign to deck the page
That tells of blood-stained crimes, and war's barbaric rage?
One, one alone, omnipotent and fair,
Bends her sweet brow, and listens to my prayer.
That power benign, beneath whose shadowing wings
Bursts the bright germ of all created things;
Who, grasping gently the revolving poles,
Turns the green earth, and gilds it as it rolls;
To whom the barbarous feuds of Shah or Khan
Merge in the wise economy of man;
And to whose heart the insect is as dear
As the bright planet glistening in its sphere.
Yes! wondrous Nature, on thy name I call,
Queen of this glorious world, and parent of us all!

Of all the lovely lands to Nature dear,
And to the Sun—"The Painter of the Year"[125]—
One favoured spot appears more blest than all
Its rival wonders o'er this earthly ball;
'Tis where CABUL her flowery meads expand,
The pride and boast of all the Asian land.
Who has not felt his boyish bosom beat,
When Fancy half revealed this bright retreat?—
When young Imagination, lingering o'er
The magic page of Oriental lore,
The gorgeous scenes by Inatulla made,
And all the thousand tales of Scheherzade,
Dreamed of some dazzling region far away,
Lit by the earliest beams of opening day;

Where all the earth was strewed with gem-like flowers,
And flower-like gems illumed the crystal bowers.
This is the land—'twas here our fancy strayed,
Here are the valleys where in dreams we played,
When Bagdad rivalled Rome's imperial name,
And Cæsar dwindled in Alraschid's fame;
When, in the wonders Sinbad brought to light,
Thy name, Columbus, faded from our sight;
And when more bright than golden Istamboul,
Spread the delicious gardens of Cabul.

Though now we view the land with calmer glance,
Still 'tis the land of beauty and romance:
A mingled maze of sunshine and of snows,
Rocks for the pine, and valleys for the rose.
Thunder in its torrents, music in its rills,
Lambs on its plains, and lions on its hills;
A neutral land, where every flower is known
That loves the torrid or the temperate zone.
Where Indian palm-trees spread their feathery hands
Above the tender flowers of chillier lands!
Here every clime presents its fragrant store,
Here every flower recalls some distant shore;
From simple plants that love the western ray,
To white and yellow roses of Cathay.

Oh! words are weak, description is but mean,
To paint the glories of this brilliant scene.
Here the cool groves rich mulberry fruits adorn,
Pale as the moon, or purple as the morn;

Here giant planes with fan-like branches rise
And shield the cistus from the burning skies;
Here the pomegranate spreads its scarlet flowers,
And tapering dates enrich the palm-tree bowers;
The silvery plantain rises on our view,
The same as when in Eden's bowers it grew[126];
The guava hangs its claret-coloured fruit,
While the narcissus nestles at its foot!
Its blushing fruits the wild pistachio yields,
And the tall tamarisk towers among the fields.

'Twere vain to tell of all the countless flowers
That o'er this land indulgent Nature showers:
The fragrant thyme—the Prophet rose's bloom—
The jessamine's breath—the violet's perfume.
The tulip here in matchless beauty glows,
And steals a fragrance from its neighbouring rose.
The humble poppy here the sight deceives,
And waves "the tulip of a hundred leaves"[127].
The simple daisy—lovelier, dearer far
Than Ghuzni's plums or figs of Candahar—
Sports in the meads, and climbs each mossy cliff,
Among the purple vines of Istalif.
Through every vale, where'er we chance to roam,
Crowd the sweet sights that glad our eyes at home.
The pink-white blossoms of the apple there
Mix with the pearly clusters of the pear.
The cherry hangs its coral balls on high,
And the soft peach swells tempting to the eye.
The magpie chatters in the golden vales,
Where sings the "Bulbul of a thousand tales,"

Whose silvery notes can imitate the strain
Of every bird in Nature's wide domain!
Oh! if 'twere true, as Eastern fables tell[128],
That 'mid these groves the first-arch rebel fell,
When the lost seraph, hurled from on high,
Flashed like a burning star along the flaming sky!
Recovering slowly from his dreadful trance,
And casting round his wonder-waking glance,
He must have thought—so fair each vale and hill—
His fall a dream, and Heaven around him still!

If ever land were made to be the seat
Of happy homes, and pleasure's calm retreat,
'Twere surely this. Here Peace should have its birth,
High on the topmost regions of the Earth,
Far, far removed from tumult and from strife,
And all the crimson crimes of human life.
These mountain Tempes—smiling, verdant, gay—
Shining like emeralds o'er the Himalay,
Should not, in faintest echoes, even repeat
The murderous din that thunders at their feet.
But ah! how different the truth has been:
This sunny land is discord's favourite scene,
Made, both by foreign and domestic crime,
One field of ruin since the birth of Time.
When native treachery ceased but for an hour,
Then surely came the scourge of foreign power;
And all the ills that crowd the conqueror's train,
From Alexander down to Tamarlane,

Whose fitting titles, on their flags unfurled,
Like Jehansoz', were "burners of the world"[129].
Those vulgar victors, whose ill-omened names
The dotard Fame, with babbling tongue, proclaims;
Whose conquests form, in every clime and age,
The blood-red rubric of the historic page;
Whose fatal path, the trampled nations o'er,
On the world's map is traced in lines of gore.
Like to those insects of a summer hour
Which float with gaudy wing from flower to flower,
And leave (as oft the startled swain perceives)
A shower of blood upon the rifled leaves[130].
Pity that fairest lands should have their charms,
But as attractions for the conqueror's arms;
When War's dread vulture wings its screaming flight
O'er the doomed earth, which shudders at the sight,
No hideous desert tempts its blood-shot eye,
No useless waste allures it from the sky;
But should it chance to view a smiling scene,
Where the blithe bee floats humming o'er the green,
Where flocks and herds repose beneath the trees,
And the rich harvest bends before the breeze,
Then, then, alas! he checks his fatal wing,
And, like the bolt of Heaven's avenging King,
With frightful ruin burns along the air,
And of a garden makes a desert there.
Like to that wonder of a thousand dyes,
The famed Chameleon Bird[131] of eastern skies,
Which high in air wings wildly to and fro,
Save when a tempting vineyard smiles below,

Then, only then, his soaring pinion fails,
And down he falls amid the purple vales.
But while we brand these regal robbers' lust,
Let the indignant muse at least be just;
Let one be singled from the gory crowd,
Of whom his sect and nation may be proud.
Yes, Baber[132], yes, to thee the praise is due,
Praise that, alas! is merited by few,
Who, having power to injure and destroy,
Feel, in restoring, more ecstatic joy.
Oft have I thought, when wandering fancy ran
To that small marble mosque of Shah Jehan[133],
Which lifts its polished dome unto the sky
In that sweet garden where your ashes lie,
Of all your simple tastes, in quiet hours,
For hills, and trees, and fountains, and sweet flowers,—
Your love of nature, gently gilding all
Those stains which even on souls like thine may fall.
For ah! how few upon this earth are found,
Who, like the Huma[134], never touch the ground!

But to return to this distracted land—
These snow-clad mountains, which so proudly stand,
And to whose peaks the privilege is given
To turn aside the clouds and winds of heaven[135],
Were powerless all to save these smiling vales
From man's attacks and war's destructive gales.
Alas! that England should conclude the page
That bears the spoilers' names of every age.

A rumour spreads—it flies from mouth to mouth—
"The Russian Eagle flieth to the south;
With daring wing he wanders wild and free
From the cold Baltic to the Indian Sea."
When lo! forgetful of her fame and might,
England, forsooth, must stop the Eagle's flight.
With hurried pace her veteran legions rush
Up the steep summits of the Hindoo Cush,
To raise a shout, and threaten from afar
The imperial bird of conquest and the Czar?
Must England ever play this selfish game?
Must England's fears obscure even England's fame?
Must England's policy in every land,
So coldly great, so miserably grand,
Like Bamean's monstrous deity be known[136],—
Vast, yet deformed—a god, and yet a stone?
What though her banners floated for an hour
From the high top of Balla Hissar's tower;
What though her bullets scared the peaceful bee
From the red blossoms of the argwhan tree;
What though her arms in dreadful vengeance rang
Through the fair city where Ferdusi sang[137],
And every dome, and every glistening spire,
Fell in the flames of her avenging fire;
What though she bore, as trophies of its doom,
Those gates of sandal-wood from Mahmoud's tomb,
Perhaps once more in Indian groves to shine,
The dazzling portals of some idol's shrine[138];—
Do these repay the blood and treasure lost?
Do these restore to life her slaughtered host,

Whose shroudless corses—that Soojah might rule—
Glut the fierce vultures of the Khoord Cabul[139].

Oh, may we learn experience from the past,
And peace and love possess the world at last.
Instead of frowning forts, let altars rise,
To bless the nations under distant skies;
O'er towering hills and vales of purple moss,
Let peaceful armies bear the saving cross!
And let those fleets that made the whole world weep,
With useful arts go bounding o'er the deep,
To every clime and every ocean isle,
Like to those fragrant navies of the Nile,
Which bear the bee and its ambrosial store,
A blessing and a joy to every peaceful shore[140].

1842.

TO ETHNA.

DA LEI SI MOVE CIASCAN MIO PENSIERO,
PERCHE L'ANIMA HA PRESO QUALITATE
DI SUA BELLA PERSONA.

DANTE.

First loved, last loved, best loved of all I've loved!—
Ethna, my boyhood's dream, my manhood's light,—
Pure angel spirit, in whose light I've moved,
Full many a year, along life's darksome night!
Thou wert my star, serenely shining bright
Beyond youth's passing clouds and mists obscure;
Thou wert the power that kept my spirit white,
My soul unsoiled, my heart untouched and pure.
Thine was the light from Heaven that ever must endure.

Purest, and best, and brightest, no mishap,
No chance, or change can break our mutual ties;
My heart lies spread before thee like a map,
Here roll the tides, and there the mountains rise;
Here dangers frown and there hope's streamlet flies,
And golden promontories cleave the main:
And I have looked into thy lustrous eyes,
And saw the thought thou couldst not all restrain,
A sweet soft sympathetic pity for my pain!

Dearest and best, I dedicate to thee,
From this hour forth, my hopes, my dreams, my cares,
All that I am, and all I e'er may be,—
Youth's clustering locks, and age's thin white hairs;
Thou by my side, fair vision, unawares—
Sweet saint—shalt guard me as with angel's wings;
To thee shall rise the morning's hopeful prayers,
The evening hymns, the thoughts that midnight brings,
The worship that like fire out of the warm heart springs.

Thou wilt be with me through the struggling day,
Thou wilt be with me through the pensive night,
Thou wilt be with me, though far, far away
Some sad mischance may snatch you from my sight.
In grief, in pain, in gladness, in delight,
In every thought thy form shall bear a part—
In every dream thy memory shall unite,
Bride of my soul! and partner of my heart!
Till from the dreadful bow flieth the fatal dart!

Am I deceived? and do I pine and faint
For worth that only dwells in Heaven above,
Ah! if thou'rt not the Ethna that I paint,
Then thou art not the Ethna that I love;—
If thou art not as gentle as the dove,
And good as thou art beautiful, the tooth
Of venomed serpents will not deadlier prove
Than that dark revelation; but, in sooth,
Ethna, I wrong thee, dearest, for thy name is TRUTH[141].

THE LAY MISSIONER.

Had I a wish,—'twere this, that Heaven would make
My heart as strong to imitate as love,
That half its weakness it could leave, and take
Some spirit's strength, by which to soar above,
A lordly eagle mated with a dove.
Strong-will and warm affection, these be mine;
Without the one no dreams has fancy wove,
Without the other soon these dreams decline,
Weak children of the heart, which fade away and pine!

Strong have I been in love, if not in will;
Affections crowd and people all the past,
And now, even now, they come and haunt me still,
Even from the graves where once my hopes were cast.
But not with spectral features—all aghast—
Come they to fright me; no, with smiles and tears,
And winding arms, and breasts that beat as fast
As once they beat in boyhood's opening years,
Come the departed shades, whose steps my rapt soul hears.

Youth has passed by, its first warm flush is o'er,
And now tis nearly noon; yet unsubdued
My heart still kneels and worships, as of yore,
Those twin-fair shapes, the Beautiful and Good!

Valley and mountain, sky and stream, and wood,
And that fair miracle, the human face,
And human nature in its sunniest mood,
Freed from the shade of all things low and base,—
These in my heart still hold their old accustom'd place.

'Tis not with pride, but gratitude, I tell
How beats my heart with all its youthful glow,
How one kind act doth make my bosom swell,
And down my cheeks the sweet, warm, glad tears flow.
Enough of self, enough of me you know,
Kind reader, but if thou wouldst further wend,
With me, this wilderness of weak words thro',
Let me depict, before the journey end,
One whom methinks thou'lt love, my brother and my friend.

Ah! wondrous is the lot of him who stands
A Christian Priest, within a Christian fane,
And binds with pure and consecrated hands,
Round earth and heaven, a festal, flowery chain;
Even as between the blue arch and the main,
A circling western ring of golden light
Weds the two worlds, or as the sunny rain
Of April makes the cloud and clay unite,
Thus links the Priest of God the dark world and the bright.

All are not priests, yet priestly duties may,
And should be all men's: as a common sight
We view the brightness of a summer's day,
And think 'tis but its duty to be bright;

But should a genial beam of warming light
Suddenly break from out a wintry sky,
With gratitude we own a new delight,
Quick beats the heart and brighter beams the eye,
And as a boon we hail the splendour from on high.

'Tis so with men, with those of them at least
Whose hearts by icy doubts are chill'd and torn;
They think the virtues of a Christian Priest
Something professional, put on and worn
Even as the vestments of a Sabbath morn:
But should a friend or act or teach as he,
Then is the mind of all its doubtings shorn,
The unexpected goodness that they see
Takes root, and bears its fruit, as uncoerced and free!

One I have known, and haply yet I know,
A youth by baser passions undefiled,
Lit by the light of genius and the glow
Which real feeling leaves where once it smiled;
Firm as a man, yet tender as a child;
Armed at all points by fantasy and thought,
To face the true or soar amid the wild;
By love and labour, as a good man ought,
Ready to pay the price by which dear truth is bought!

'Tis not with cold advice or stern rebuke,
With formal precept, or with face demure,
But with the unconscious eloquence of look,
Where shines the heart so loving and so pure:

'Tis these, with constant goodness, that allure
All hearts to love and imitate his worth.
Beside him weaker natures feel secure,
Even as the flower beside the oak peeps forth,
Safe, though the rain descends, and blows the biting North!

Such is my friend, and such I fain would be,
Mild, thoughtful, modest, faithful, loving, gay,
Correct, not cold, nor uncontroll'd though free,
But proof to all the lures that round us play,
Even as the sun, that on his azure way
Moveth with steady pace and lofty mien
(Though blushing clouds, like syrens, woo his stay),
Higher and higher through the pure serene,
Till comes the calm of eve and wraps him from the scene.

A WALK BY THE BAY OF DUBLIN.

While travelled poets pen their polished rhymes
In praise of distant lands and southern climes,—
While tourists tell of gorgeous realms afar,
How bless'd by heaven—how beautiful they are!—
While every scene but moderately fair,
Shines on their page, as if all heaven were there!—
Scenes which, if viewed by their discerning eyes
Within the circle of their native skies,

Tho' decked with all that Nature's hands bestow,
Were passed unheeded as too mean and low!—
While thus are praised, in learned rhyme and prose,
Italia's sun and wild Helvetia's snows,
The trackless forest and the teeming mine,
Ice at the Poles and earthquakes at the Line,—
One who, yet free from fashion's freezing zone,
Admires not every country but—his own!—
Whose heart unchill'd and whose impartial eye
Dare to be just to scenes which round him lie!—
With skilless hand he ventures to portray
A sketch, Eblana, of thy beauteous bay,—
Rival and twin of bright Parthenope!

'Tis that sweet hour when morning melts away
In the full splendours of the golden day,
When sea and sky, when mountain, vale, and stream,
Bask in the glories of the noontide beam!
Oh! what a vision bursts upon my sight!—
Offspring of heaven and parent of delight.
This scene, which now my raptured eyes survey,
Those purple mountains and this silvery bay,
Those verdant heights, with tall trees waving o'er,
Those fearful crags which guard the crescent shore,
Those dazzling villas, crowding every steep,
Those snow-white sails which skim along the deep,
Those pointed hills which pierce the cloudless sky,
Those ruined towers which tell of days gone by,—
Form such a picture both for eye and heart,
As puts to shame the poet's—painter's art!

What words can tell—what pencil here can trace
The mingled magic of this matchless place?
On either shore what glorious views expand!
What varying wonders crowd on either hand!

Oft have I paced and traversed o'er and o'er
Marino's woods and Moynealta's[142] shore,—
Both classic spots, both worthy of the bay,—
The one of old, the other of to-day.
Here aged Brian taught the Danish horde
The offended justice of a patriot's sword.
Here too, when nigh a thousand years had roll'd
Their blood-stained waves to mix with those of old,—
When peace and freedom bless'd again our shore,
And Brian lived in Charlemont once more!—
Mid those fair groves, with taste and virtue bless'd,
Here did the patriot take his well-earned rest.
But not alone the lore of vanish'd days
Gilds this sweet spot with its reflected rays.
Here nature sports in most indulgent mood,
Laughs on the lawn and wantons in the wood!
The pansy opes its gold and violet wings,
The soaring sky-lark in the sun-light sings;
The red valerian and the ivy green,
With fragrant wild-flowers, weave their tangled screen
Round ancient trees and rocks and aged walls,
Where the thrush whistles and the cuckoo calls!

Now passing o'er, but not with careless haste,
Ratheny's strand and wild Kilbarrock's waste,

By rushy fields whose herbage oft disclose
The green-winged orchis and the pale primrose,
Let us ascend to scenes more widly fair,
Up the brown slopes of lofty Bennadair![143]
That lonely mountain which above the tide
Lifts its long back and swells its dusky side!
As some dread monster from its ocean lair
Bursts o'er the wave to breathe the upper air,
Then, fixed by magic in eternal sleep,
Spreads its huge length along the shuddering deep!
What tho' no giant oaks adorn the scene,
As fond tradition tells there once had been;
What tho' its groveless heights no more prolong
The cheerful chirpings of the wild bird's song;
Still is it rich in many a charm and grace,
Which age revives and time cannot efface;
Rich in the relics which its glens retain,
The druid altar and the ruined fane.

The samphire gatherer on each mossy glade,
Here may pursue his wild and "dreadful trade"[144].
Here those who love to view a noble scene,
Tho' vast, distinct,—sublime, but still serene,—
Here may they rest, and feast their dazzled sight
With all the glories circling round this height.
From Edria's Isle[145] to where Three Sisters[146] stand,
Like giant Graces o'er the southern land,
The waveless sea like one vast mirror shines,
Bright as the treasures of ten thousand mines!
Here, lovely bay! above thy tranquil sea,
Here let me take my fond farewell of thee.

When grief or pain, despondency or care,
Fell on my heart, and worked their ruin there,
One quiet walk along thy silent shore,
One look at thee, and all my grief was o'er!
When friends and brothers quickly pass'd away,
The fond companions of my earlier day,
When disappointment came to dwell with me,
Still, still I clung to nature and to thee!
Like a fond mother watching o'er her child,
Thus hast thou ever on my footsteps smiled,
Oh! shame if then I acted not my part,
And gave not back to thee my ever-grateful heart!

1842.

SONNET,

WITH A COPY OF "THE SPIRIT OF THE NATION."

DEAREST!—Affection long has set apart
This day for special worship. At Love's shrine,
Breathing warm prayers to good Saint Valentine,
To-day shall kneel full many a throbbing heart:
Gladly would I too play the votary's part,
Gladly pour forth the fervent flattering line,
If the good saint would graciously incline
To hear my prayer and smile upon my art.
In place of these, or with them, dearest friend,
Accept this book.—'Twas built in hopeful hours,
By youthful hearts essaying here to blend
The bard's light labours with the patriot's powers,—
Not uselessly,—the Isle from end to end
Already smiles with hardy native flowers!

ST. VALENTINE'S DAY.

SONNET,

WITH A COPY OF CAMPBELL'S POEMS.

My dearest love, sole sweet'ner of my life,
Guide and companion through the world's rough way,
Upon this morning of the new year's day,
When, 'mid the winter agony and strife
Of warring winds, the joy-proclaiming fife
And the clear bells in gladsome concert play,
Bidding the sore-travailing earth be gay
For the sweet child new-born,—Oh! darling wife!
Let me too join the chorus of delight
That echoes now o'er mount and vale and stream.
For the new joys that round about me gleam,
Blessings be on thee, dearest, day and night!—
Take this fair book, its strains may wing Time's flight,
And with the Bard enjoy "Hope's" blissful dream!

New Year's Day, 1849.

Translations.

TRANSLATIONS.

French.

THE SICK YOUTH.

AN IDYL.

FROM ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.

"O God Apollo! from thy sacred haunts,
God of all life and life-preserving plants,—
O saving God!—God beautiful and mild!—
Take pity on my son, my only child;
Take pity on his mother's tears and sighs,
Think that for him, who here abandoned dies,
She only lives, and grant not in thine ire
That she should live to see her son expire!
Young God! do thou assist his youth, and tame—
Tame in his breast that wild and feverish flame
That feeds upon the flower of his young life;
And if, Apollo, from this deadly strife
Victorious, and, escaped the Stygian shore,
He tends the flocks of Menelus once more,
These hands, these aged hands, will offer up
And at thy statue hang my onyx cup,

And in the summer time of every year
Shall at thy altar bleed the bellowing steer!

"But ah! my son, can'st thou so cruel lie,
And not one soft consoling word reply?
And wilt thou leave me thus? and canst thou wish to die?
Canst thou be deaf to all my sighs and prayers?
And leave me here alone with my white hairs?
And dost thou wish that I should close thine eyes,
And place thy ashes where thy father lies?
These pious cares are thine: as natural debts
My tomb expects thy tears and thy regrets.
Speak, speak, my son, what anguish dost thou feel?—
Those ills are worse that madly we conceal.
Oh! wilt thou never raise those heavy lids?"

"Farewell, dear mother, death thy prayer forbids.
Oh! best beloved, thou hast no more a son,
And I must leave thee—oh! thou widowed one!
A burning ulcer eats my very heart,
I breathe with pain, and every moment start,
And think each struggling sigh will be my last.
Adieu!—This tender couch where I am cast
Wounds me—this light coverlet weighs down
My weakness; like a burning crown
The very air weighs on my throbbing head;
A heavy atmosphere around is spread,
In which I faint, my mother, and expire."

"Oh! stay, my only child, a quickening fire
Lies in this draught, which will thy strength renew;
Mallows and ditany, poppies of scarlet hue,

All plants whose powerful juices give repose,
Are here. A fair Thessalian, by my woes
Melted, and moved to pity one so young,
Has o'er the seething cup her strong enchantments sung.
These three days past that here I watch and weep,
No food have thy lips known, nor thine eyes sleep.
Take it, my son, yield to my frequent sighs.
Think from thy old disconsolate mother's eyes
Those tears descend,—that mother who of old
Guided thy little feet—whose arms did fold
Thy tender frame—whose ever-sheltering breast
Pillowed thee oft in childhood's happy rest—
Who taught thee first to speak the words of love—
Who with my cheerful songs did often move
Thy tiny lips to smile, and hush thy cries
When thy young teeth forced tears from out thine eyes.
Press with thy lips,—alas! now pale and cold,—
By which this breast was sweetly pressed of old,
This juice, which comes thy sinking life to raise,
As my milk nourished thee in childhood's days!"

"O hills of Erymanthus!—O ye vales!—
O woods, where breathe the soft sonorous gales,
Making the leaves to dance, the waves to moan,
And o'er each youthful bosom the white zone
Of their light garments rustling, of that band
Of graceful nymphs who bless the Arcadian land!
My mother, dost thou know it?—on the banks
Of Erymanthus; there no wolves make thin the ranks
Of the young lambs, nor serpent's poison'd prongs.
O countenance divine!—O festivals!—O songs!—

Feet interlaced, and crystal waves and flowers!—
Such loveliness exhausting nature's powers.
Gods! shall I never more those flowers behold?
Those arms, those snowy feet, those locks of waving gold?
Oh! bear me, bear me to the happy shore
Of Erymanthus, that I may see once more
The charming maid, and, watching from afar,
See from her roof the smoke curl to the evening star!
Too happy father, venerable sage,
Her tender voice enchants thy green old age.
Gods! where on high in verdant ramparts rise
The fragrant hedges—there, with tearful eyes,
And look of pensive melancholy gloom,
And scattered tresses, leaning o'er a tomb,
I see her weep her mother's mortal doom:
How tender are thine eyes!—how fair thy face!
Wilt thou, too, come and weep upon the place
Where I lie buried, and, as close the gates
Of my cold tomb, exclaim, 'How cruel are the Fates!'"

"My son—my son, 'tis love's insensate glow
That thus has wounded thy poor bosom so.
Love is the torment of all breasts below;
If all men's hearts, who weep unseen, were bare,
All would perceive that Love is tyrant there.
But say, my son, what charming nymph is this?
Whom hast thou seen—what virgin shape of bliss?
Wert thou not rich and fair, ere sorrow's power
Had killed on thy young cheek the roseate flower?
Speak—is it Æglé, Neptune's darling care?
Or young Irené, with her waving hair?

Or that proud beauty,—she whose name I hear
Spoken each day, and wafted far and near,—
That lovely Daphne?" "What is this I hear?
Ah! peace, my mother!—speak not so loud;
She is, alas! inflexible and proud—
Like the immortals, terrible and fair!
A thousand lovers did in vain declare
Their love, and with the same disdain
She would have spurned my passion and my pain.
My daring love, oh! never let her hear.
But—death and torment!—oh! my mother dear,
Thou seest how I perish thus in grief,
List to my prayer, and come to my relief.
Go seek her; let thy locks of silvery hue,
Thine age, thy features, offer to her view
Her mother's sacred form revived in you!
This basket take, with choicest fruit supplied,
Our ivory Cupid take, the hamlet's pride,
The onyx cup at Corinth won in strife,
Take my young kids,—oh! take my heart—my life,—
Throw all before her feet, let thy tears run,
Say that I die, that thou hast lost thy son;
Fall at the old man's feet, embrace his knees,
Adjure all gods and temples, skies and seas!
Go! and, if back thou comest, the prize not won—
Adieu! my mother, thou hast lost thy son!"

"Hope tells my heart that he shall still be mine"—
In a sweet silence down she doth incline,
Covers his forehead, dulled with grief, not years,
With soft maternal kisses mixed with tears;

Then forth she hastes, alarm her old eyes dims,
Tottering she goes, with trembling heart and limbs;
Arrives, and, soon returning, cries with joy—
Panting she cries—"Thou'lt live, my darling boy."
The old man, smiling, follows to the place;
The fair young girl, with bashful rosy face,
Enters, and throws a glance upon the bed;
The youth, as bashful, fain would hide his head
Beneath the coverlet. "Three days have flown,"
She says, "and thou, my friend, no fête hath known;
What makes thee ill?—why would'st thou die? They say
That I can cure thee; live, then, live, I pray,
And let us in one family combine;
My parent gains a son—a daughter thine!"

THE BLIND OLD MAN.

AN IDYL.

FROM ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.

——"God of Claros, God of the Silver Bow,
Sminthean Apollo, if thou dost not show
Light to these wandering feet and sightless eyes,
Here must I perish beyond doubt!" With sighs
'Twas thus the old man ceased his piteous plaint,
And near a wood he walked, feeble and faint,

And there upon a mossy stone sat down;
Three shepherds, children of that soil, with brown
Cheeks, shaded o'er with clustering golden locks,
Followed him: by the bleating of their flocks,
And their loud-barking mastiffs, thither led.
Him they protected, as he feebly fled
From their rude dogs' inhospitable rage,
Restraining them: and as they reached the sage,
And heard his voice, and saw his sightless eyes,
"Sure this must be some dweller of the skies!"
They cried aloud.—"His face is full of pride,
And from the rustic girdle round him tied
Hangs a rude lyre, and his deep voice doth seem
To move the air and the woods, the heavens and the ocean stream."

He hears their steps—is troubled—in despair
Turns his quick ear, and lifts his hands in prayer.
"Fear not, unhappy stranger," they exclaim,
"If thou, indeed, beneath this earthly frame,
Art not some heavenly messenger of peace,
Some god, some patron deity of Greece,—
Such god-like grace ennobles thy old age!—
Or if, but only mortal, thou dost wage
Unequal war with fate,—the pitying wave,
That saved you from a wild and unknown grave,
Has cast you among men who've learned to know
And feel, not aggravate, a brother's woe.
Strange that the destinies for ever blend
Some balanced ill with every joy they send!
Heaven, that did give thee such a voice, denies
The light of day unto thy darkened eyes."

"Children—for child-like, tender, soft, and sweet,
Fall your young voices on my ear—discreet,
More than I could have hoped for from your years,
Are all your words: but the poor stranger fears
His woes can wake but outrage and disdain.
Do not compare me with the immortal train.
This endless night—these wrinkles—this white hair—
Is this a forehead for a god to wear?
Ah! I am but a man, and one of those
Whose fate is wretchedness. If, bent with woes,
Wandering and poor, some wretch has pass'd along,
With him you may compare me. Though in song
I never yet, like Thamyris, aspired
To vie with Phœbus: never yet, inspired
By the Eumenides, have I had cause
To punish on myself the offended laws
Of heaven, like Œdipus; and yet, malign,
The all-powerful gods visit my life's decline
With darkness, exile, and want, as if their crimes were mine."

"Take, and may soon thy destiny be changed!"
They said; and drawing what they had arranged
Within a goat's-skin for their day's repast,
Out from the black and shining hairs they cast
(Emulous to serve him) on his heavy knees
Bread of pure wheat, sweet almonds, cream-white cheese,
Rich oily olives, figs so honey sweet.
Nor was his dog, lying between his feet,
Without his share. Languid and wet he lay,
For, by the sailors being borne away,

He, out at sea, escaped the pirate band,
And, swimming from the ship, rejoined him on the strand.

"Not always iron is the rod of Fate,"
The old man said. "With heart almost elate,
I thank ye, gentle children, sent from Jove;
Happy the parents whose heaven-favoured love
Gave birth to such as you! But come, draw near,
My hands, at least, shall know you: bright and clear
Again I almost dream that I can see!
Ah! ye are beautiful as young, all three:
Sweet are your faces, for each voice is sweet!
How fair the forms where grace and virtue meet!
Grow, as I've seen Latona's palm-tree grow,
When o'er the waves I wandered, long ago,
To holy Delos, ere my sight had flown;
There, by Apollo's sacred altar-stone
These eyes beheld the beauteous palm-tree stand,
The gift of heaven, the glory of the land.
Grow tall, revered, and fruitful like that tree,
Since you have honoured misery in me.
Scarce have you seen your thirteenth birth-day morn,
Scarcely, my children, were your mothers born,
When I was almost old:—sit near to me
Thou who dost seem the eldest: unto thee
I trust me. Thou will tend with anxious care
The blind old man." "Oh! father, tell us where
Thou wanderest, and whence: for all around
Our stormy coasts bellow the waves profound."

"With merchants bound from Cumae came I o'er
The dark blue billows from the Carian shore;

Wishing to see if Greece had yet for me
A home, and Fate a better destiny,
Less jealous gods and days more gladsome bright,
For hope will shine, till death conceals its light:
But poor, and without money for my fare,
They threw me on the shore, I know not where."

"O sweet-voiced old man, then thou didst not sing;
Such tones as thine could purchase everything."

"Children! the nightingale's pure spirit strain
Falls on the bloody vulture's ear in vain:
The rich, the coarse, the grasping, and the strong,
Ne'er ope their souls, nor feel the power of song:
Alone, in silence, on the slippery strand,
Beside the roaring sea, with staff in hand,
I walked along, and heard from the near grass
The bleating flocks shaking their bells of brass.
Then I had ta'en this lyre, the flexile cords,
Even though my hand be weak, with fitting words,
Had sung the praises of the gods above,
And above all the hospitable Jove,
Had not enormous dogs, with baying throats,
Assailed me; then were hushed my rising notes,
And I was wretched, heaving fearful sighs,
Until you drove them off with stones and cries."

"Alas! my father, then the world has grown
Worse than it was. There was a time, the tone
Of a rich, eloquent lyre—divinely sweet
Like thine—had drawn the wolf from his retreat,
And, with the vanquished tiger, humbled him at thy feet."

"The barbarians!—I was seated near the poop—
'Blind vagabond,' exclaimed the mocking troop,
'Sing, if thy wit has still survived thine eyes,
Amuse our languor, thank the favouring skies.'
I, to confound them, though my heart was wrung,
Silenced its throbbings, and constrained my tongue.
They heard me not, my curbing hand repressed
The angry god that struggled in my breast:
And thou, O Cumæ! since 'twas sons of thine
Outraged Mnemosyne, the nymph divine,
May dark oblivion hide their whole career,
And may thy very name vanish and disappear!"

"Come to our village, father, it is near,
And loveth those who to the Muse are dear;
A chair with silver nails, beneath the tree
Where hangs an ivory lyre, we'll place for thee;
And then with wine and honey, every day,
We'll drive the memory of thy ills away;
And, if thou wilt, O rhapsodist divine!
Sing some celestial melody of thine,
Upon the way, we'll own Apollo near,
And say 'tis he who breathes the enchantment on our ear."

"Yes, I will go; but stay, my children, stay,
What happy land is this through which we stray?"

"This happy isle is Sicos, the most blest."

"Hail, lovely Sicos!—twice am I thy guest;
For once before, the happiest of men,
I trod thy shores. Your fathers knew me then.

They grew like you; mine eyes could then behold
The Sun, the Spring, the Morning's rosy gold;
Then I was young and bold, and took my place
First in the dance, the combat, and the race.
I have seen Corinth, Argos, Crete, and the hundred towns,
And the rich fertile plains the Egyptian river drowns:
But sea, and land, and age, and woes, at length
Have sapped away this aching body's strength:
My voice remains. 'Tis thus with folded wings,
The small cicada sits, consoles herself, and sings.
Let us begin with Heaven. Hail! sovereign Jove,
And thou, O Sun, that from thy throne above,
Seest and hearest all things! Mighty Seas,
Rivers, and Lands, and ye dark Deities,
Too slow for needed vengeance—hail! all hail!
Come all ye dwellers in the Olympian vale,
Muses! who look mysterious nature through,
While we, poor mortals, know nothing except from you."

He sings, while trees with boughs of shadowy brown,
In gentle cadence, bend their branches down,
And shepherds, heedless how their flocks may stray,
And travellers, abandoning their way,
Run towards him. He their many steps doth hear
Round his young guide and him. With greedy ear,
Thronging in crowds, and bearing many a wreath,
Wood-nymphs and sylvan gods listen and scarcely breathe.
For in wild, wandering strains, he sweetly sings
The fruitful seeds of all created things;
Water and fire—the earth—the air above—
The rivers flowing from the breast of Jove;

The banded cities, oracles and arts,
And Love, the immortal fruit of human hearts;
The King divine, Olympus and the skies,
And the world shaken by his angry eyes;
And gods, who other gods in fight withstood,
And the earth red with more than mortal blood;
The assembled kings, the dust that hides the stars,
Raised by the warriors' feet and murderous cars;
The steel-clad heroes, flashing through the fight,
Like a vast fire upon a mountain's height;
The long-maned courser, spurning all control,
And with a human voice stirring the warrior's soul.
From these his song the peaceful town regains,
And laws, and orators, and fertile plains.
But soon he sings the ramparts warrior-filled,
The porch wherein the victim's blood is spilled,
The siege, that makes the plaintive wife afraid,
The mourning mother, and the captive maid.
He sings the corn, the flocks that roam the meads
Bleating or bellowing, the rustic reeds,
The frolic crowds that to the vintage throng,
The flute, the lyre, the dancing notes of song.
Then, too, the winds he wakens from their sleep,
And sinks the struggling sailor in the deep.
Or, on an azure rock, melodiously,
He calls in crowds the Daughters of the Sea;
Who with loud cries emerge from out the tide,
And to the Trojan shore the vessel guide.
Then he lays bare the Stygian shores of hell,
The demigods, the fields of asphodel;

The countless shades, the old men's lonely sighs,
The young men ravished from their parents' eyes;
The child, whose cradle terminates its life,
The virgin, struck by death ere she becomes a wife.
But, woods! and streams!—hard rocks, and mountains tall!
What gentle horror trembles through you all,
When soon, at Lemnos, on the forge divine,
He welds the wondrous woof, so strong and fine
(Such subtle net Arachne never wove),
And chains within the rosy Queen of Love!
And when he girdles with a marble zone,
And sudden turns proud Niobe to stone.
And when his song repeats the mournful strain
Of Aedon—who weeps, and weeps in vain,
Her rash revenge—her son unconscious slain—
Then flies away, and ends her piteous tale
Amid the lonely woods—a nightingale!
Then with rich wine his skilful hands distil
The strong Nepenthe—antidote of ill.
He culls the Moly—flower of human craft,
And with the peaceful Lotus blends the draught.
Charmed by the philtre, men forget to feel
Love for their kindred, or their country's weal.
Then saw they Ossa, and thy crimsoned wood,
Peneus; and Olympus, red with blood,
What time unto the bridal feast did crowd
As guests the monstrous children of the cloud.
That fatal night when Theseus' friend was wed,
When Theseus' self, midst the great feast outspread,
Midst wine, and joy, and late-spoke bridal vows,
Was forced to snatch his friend's half-naked spouse

Out of the drunken arms of savage Eurytus.
Suddenly, sword in hand, cried hot Pirithous,
"Stay! traitor, here my wrath must be appeased."
But, ere he reached the Centaur, Dryas seized
Upon a mighty torch-branched iron tree,
Bristling and red with flaming hair, which he
Hurled on the impious quadruped; it falls,
Crushing him down. In vain the monster calls
For pity;—vainly too, amid the gloom,
Strikes with his hoof the ground about to be his tomb.
The banquet-table crushes on the grass
Evagrus, Cymele, and Periphas,
Impelled by Nessus. Then Pirithous
Slaughters Petræus and Antimachus,
And Cyllarus, with feet so white and fair,
And swarthy Macareus, who doth wear
Three lions' skins—his own great spoil—the rest
Hides his four sides, and arms his double breast.
Bending beneath a rock's stupendous weight,
Raised for revenge, Bianor meets his fate;
Struck by an antique vase of wondrous size,
Hurled from Alcides' hand, the monster dies.
Alcides and his club in triumph pile
Clanis, Demoleon, and Lycothas vile,
And golden-haired Ripheus, who doth wear
Shades of his native clouds amid his hair.
Eurynomus doth seek a second fight,
For with his feet, moving in rapid flight,
He strikes at Nestor's shield. As Helops flies
(Four-footed monster), agile Crantor tries

To reach him, but Eurynomus is first,
And with a knotty maple-tree had burst
Upon him, had not mighty Theseus seen
The flying monster. With a conqueror's mien,
And smeared with blood, a burning oak he sweeps
From off the altar. On his haunch he leaps,
Drags backs his head, even by his dreadful hair,
And as the monster gapes in wild despair,
And opes his mouth to gasp and pant for breath,
Plunges at once therein the burning tree and death!
The altar is despoiled—the flames arise—
The woods are filled with shrieks and women's cries;
Hoofs strike the earth, and corses strew the ground,
And broken vases lie, and wailing shrieks resound!

Thus the great sage, in figures bold and strong,
Unfolds the tissue of his holy song.
His three young guides, moved by the noble sight,
Look on his face with wonder and delight,—
See from his lips the words of wisdom flow,
As from the mountain's top the winter's snow;
While round about, with boughs in every hand,
Men, women, children, dance, a varied band.
Virgins and youths—the quiet hamlet's pride—
Sing as they dance:—"O father, here reside;
Stay with us, great blind prophet, sweet-voiced sage,
Friend of the gods, and glory of the age.
Games for five years will mark the day as blest,
On which we first received great HOMER as our guest."

THE MUSES.

AN ELEGY.

FROM ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.

O Muses! sacred, solitary maids,
Come from your grottos, founts, and favourite shades,
Whether you pace the flowery vales of Nisme,
Or pleasant fancies, or some waking dream,
Bind you by Loire's fair bank, or sweet Garonne;
Whether among the light nymphs of the Rhone
You rest admiring, when the moon's calm light
Renews their dances through the fragrant night:
Come! I have fled the city's wretched joys,
The wearying echo of its vulgar noise.
On glaring highways all with dust o'erstrown,
No flowers of poesy have ever grown;
The tranquil lyre, with quiet fancy, flies,
Startled and scared from tumult and from cries;
And rapid cars, and brass wheels' creeking hum,
Frighten the Muse, which instantly is dumb!
Come, pour your treasures in a copious tide;
But oh! ye Muses, when shall ye preside
As my Penates? When shall I be grown
The dweller of a field which is my own?
When shall I ruralize in calm delight,
This my sole task each happy day and night,
To sleep and do no more,—a useless poet quite,—

Tasting, apart from labour and from strife,
The sweet oblivion of a tranquil life?
Ye know from earliest youth my spirit yields
To all the rustic charms of hills and fields,
And how my heart has fed on memories old,
The rural legends of the age of gold.
Those streams and orchards, Eden's sacred place,—
The sweet first cradle of the human race;
And gentle Ruth, so fair and so forlorn,
Following the reapers through the prostrate corn;
And Joseph seeking upon Sichem's plains
His shepherd brethren; and Jacob's pains
For Rachel suffered,—she the prize and spoil
Of fifteen years of servitude and toil.
Ah! yes, I hope in some sequestered scene,
Circled with woods and hills and meadows green,
To have an humble roof,—a limpid spring,
Whose water, murmuring like a living thing,
Refreshes in its fruitful plaintive flight
My orchard trees, my flocks so snowy white;
There all forgetting, rich alone in health,
Far from the proud ennui that waits on wealth,
To live as they did live long since, we're told,
Whose names embalmed the sacred pages hold,
In Babylon's rich plains, the patriarchs of old!—
There to have friends and children, and a spouse
Both wise and beautiful. Beneath the boughs
Of shady woods to wander book in hand,
To feel within my breast my heart expand
With peace to which no pleasure can compare!
O gentle Melancholy! Goddess fair,

Of silent caverns and all forest glooms,
Whose languid charm insensibly consumes
The heart of him who takes his pensive way
Along the silent vales at close of day,
And sees the last of daylight's dying fire,
And on the distant hills the rosy lights expire:
In wise enjoyment, silent, thought-possessed,
Sits down, lets fall his head upon his breast,
Sees at his feet, within the azure tide,
Which, like his thoughts, so calm and pure doth glide,
The sweet reflection of the leafy crowds,
And hills, and cottage roofs, and purple-fringéd clouds.
Sees near him, back returned from happier spheres,
Those phantom shapes familiar to our tears,
That fair immortal band that fills his brain:—
Julia—weak lover—fallen without a stain;
Clarissa—in whose holy beauty breathes
The air of heaven, whose grief no poisoned thorn enwreathes,
Suffers without a groan, without a murmur dies;
And Clementina[147]—soul from purest skies,
Encircled, crushed, by undeserving pains,
Though reason flies, her innocence remains.
O cherished forms! O shapes with cheering eyes,
To you in waking dreams his spirit flies,
In tears attends you through each sad retreat,
Stands by your hearths, and views your features sweet,
Upbraids your tyrants, and with feelings strong,
Loves, those who love you, hates who do you wrong.
But suddenly he thinks,—the vision flies,—
Those touching objects of his tears and sighs

Are but perhaps of mere ideal kind,
Of genius born, and children of the mind;
He rises troubled, moveth to and fro,
Enchanting projects make his bosom glow:
He will go seek through cities, rocks, and dells,
If on the earth a Clementina dwells,
And in some desert, far from jealous eyes,
Will kneel before the maid, and serve her 'till he dies!

THE YOUNG CAPTIVE[148].

AN ODE.

FROM ANDRÉ CHÉNIER.

"Spared by the sickle, springs the ripening grain,
Tranquil the vine-branch drinks the sun-warm rain,
Nor dreads the wine-press 'neath the summer sky;
And I, like them, with youth and beauty bless'd,
What though in gloom the present hour is dress'd,
Still—still—so soon I would not wish to die!

"To death the tearless Stoic may walk forth,
For me, I weep and hope. If blows the north,
I bow and raise my head, the storm o'erblown!
Life has its days of sorrow and of joy;
What sweetest honey yet did never cloy?—
What sea so calm no storm has ever known?

" A fruitful fancy dwelleth in my brain,
On me the darksome dungeon weighs in vain,
On Hope's bright wings I soar and flee away.
The nightingale, escaped the fowler's snare,
More light, more happy, through the fields of air
Soareth and singeth all the summer day.

" And can I die? Tranquil I sink to rest,
Tranquil I wake; and o'er my happy breast
Remorse ne'er darkly broods, by day or night;
My welcome beams in every eye around,
And even here some care-worn bosoms bound,
As if my smile recalled a past delight!

" Far, far from me my pleasant journey's end!—
Of those young elms that o'er life's highway bend
Scarce have I pass'd the group that foremost stands;
At life's delicious banquet, scarce begun,
One precious drop my lips have only won
From out the cup still full within my hands.

" Still in my spring I wish to see the glow
Of autumn's fruits, and, like the sun, to go
Through all the seasons of life's changing year.
Bright on my stem the garden I adorn,
I but have seen the cheering fires of morn,—
I would complete my day, however drear!

" Death! thou canst wait—depart, do thou depart,
Go to console some bruised or broken heart—
Quick to some pale despairing sufferer fly;

For me has Nature many a green retreat,
The Muse her concerts, Love her kisses sweet:
So soon, O Death! I would not wish to die!"

Thus in my melancholy cell I hear
Those sweet complaints—that voice so soft and clear—
Those wishes of a tender captive maid,
Short'ning my days so languid and so long;
I bend beneath the gentle laws of song
The natural music that her sweet lips made.

These songs, sweet witnesses of prison'd hours,
Will make some student leave the classic bowers
Of learnéd ease to seek this captive's name.
Grace deck'd her forehead, shone in every phrase,
And those who near her pass away their days,
Will weep her fate and fear their own the same.

THREE DAYS OF CHRISTOPHER COLUMBUS.

FROM CASSIMIR DELAVIGNE.

"BACK to Europe, again, let our sails be unfurled!"
—"Three days," said Columbus, "and I give you a world!"
And he pointed his finger, and looked through the Vast,
As if he beheld the bright region at last.
He sails, and the dawn, the first day, quickly leads:
He sails, and the golden horizon recedes:

He sails, till the sun, downward sinking from view,
Hides the sea and the sky with their limitless blue.
On, onward he sails, while in vain o'er the lee
Down plunges the lead through the fathomless sea!

The pilot, in silence, leans mournfully o'er
The rudder, which creaks 'mid the dark billows' roar;
He hears the hoarse moan of the waves rushing past,
And the funeral wail of the wind-stricken mast;
The stars of far Europe have fled from the skies,
And the Cross of the South meets his terrified eyes;
But at length the slow dawn, softly streaking the night,
Illumes the dark dome with its beautiful light,
"Columbus! 'tis day, and the darkness hath past!"
"Day! and what dost thou see?"—"I see nought but the Vast!"

What matter!—he's calm!—but, ah, stranger, if you
Had your hand on his heart with such glory in view,—
Had you felt the wild throb of despair and delight
That depressed and expanded his bosom that night,
The quick alternations as morning came near,
The chill and the fever, the rapture and fear,—
You would feel that such moments exhausted the rage
And the multiplied malice and pains of an age;
You would say these three days half a lifetime have slain,
And his fame is too dear at the price of such pain.

Oh! who can describe what the crushed heart must bear,
The delirium of hope and the lonely despair,
Of a Great Man unknown, whom his age doth despise
As a fool, 'mid the vain, vulgar crowd of the wise!

Such wert thou, Galileo! Far better to die
Than thus by a horrible effort to lie!
When you gave, by an agony deep and intense,
That lie to your labours, your reason, your sense,
To the Sun, to the Earth—to that Earth, we repeat,
That you trembled to feel moving under your feet!

The second day's past—and Columbus?—he sleeps,
While Mutiny round him its dark vigil keeps:
"Shall he perish?"—"Death! death!" is the mutinous cry,
"He must triumph to-morrow, or perjured must die!"
The ingrates! Shall his tomb on to-morrow be made
Of that sea which his daring a highway hath made?
Shall that sea on to-morrow, with pitiless waves,
Fling his corse on that shore which his longing eye craves?
The corse of an unknown adventurer then—
One day later—Columbus, the greatest of men!

He dreams, how a veil drooping over the main
Is rent, at the distant horizon, in twain,
And how from beneath, on his rapturous sight
Bursts at length the New World from the darkness of night!
Oh! how fresh!—oh! how fair the new virgin earth seems!—
With gold the fruits glisten, and sparkle the streams;
Green gleams on the mountains, and gladdens the isles,
And the seas and the rivers are dimpled with smiles.
"Joy! joy!" cries Columbus, "this region is mine!"
Ah! not even its name, hapless dreamer, is thine!

Soon changes that dream from a vision so fair,
For he sees that the merciless Spaniards are there,

Who with loud mimic thunderbolts slaughter the host
Of the unarmed people that cover the coast.
He sees the fair palace, the temple on fire,
And the peaceful Cazique 'mid their ashes expire;
He sees, too—oh! saddest, oh! mournfullest sight!—
The crucifix gleam in the thick of the fight:
More terrible far than the merciless steel
Is the uplifted cross in the red hand of zeal!

He sees the earth open and reel to and fro,
And the wretches who breathe in the caverns below.
Poor captives! whose arms, in a languid despair,
Fall fatigued on the gold of the rocks that they tear.
Pale spectres! whose agonized cries, uncontrolled,
Seek the light of that sun that they're ne'er to behold.
They struggle, they pant 'mid the pestilent dews,
And by labour escape the sharp whip that pursues,
'Till a long lingering death in the cavern's dim light
Consigns them at length to eternity's night!

Columbus, oppressed by this vision of pain,
Scares it off from his feverish pallet and brain;
It dwindleth, it melteth, it fades from his eye,
As a light passing cloud in the depths of the sky.
All is changed!—he beholds in the wilds of the north,
Full of strength, full of hope, a new empire spring forth;
Its people oppressed, as the war-cry goes round,
Seize the peaceable ploughshare that furrows their ground,
Or that creature of iron which lately they swayed
As it turned into cities their forests of shade.

They have conquered!—they show him with grateful acclaim
Their Hero, their Washington—type of that name.
O sage Cincinnatus and Cato! no more
Need we doubt of thy virtue, or mocking adore.
He has caused our weak hearts that strange grandeur to feel,
And conceive what corruption till now could conceal.
In the council, a Sage by the hero is seen,
And not less revered 'neath a different mien.
He rules, he discovers, and daringly brings
Down the lightning from Heaven, and the sceptre from kings.

At length o'er Columbus slow consciousness breaks—
"Land! land!" cry the sailors, "land! land!"—he awakes—
He runs—yes! behold it—it blesseth his sight—
The land! O sweet spectacle! transport! delight!—
O generous sobs which he cannot restrain!—
What will Ferdinand say? and the Future? and Spain?
He will lay this fair land at the foot of the throne,
His king will repay all the ills he has known;
In exchange for a world what are honours and gains,
Or a crown?—but how is he rewarded?—with chains!

EXPECTATION.

FROM CASSIMIR DELAVIGNE.

TUTTO CON TE MI PIACE,
SIA COLLE, O SELVA, O PRATO.
METASTASIO.

THE morn has chased the shades of night,
The streams grow bright beneath her eye;
A golden veil of purple light
Hangs o'er the rosy eastern sky.

To catch the sun's awakening rays
Upon the turf still wet with dew,
With trembling haste the rose displays
Her crimson chalice to the view.

A sweeter zephyr fills the place,
The birds in sweeter concert sing,
More closely in a fond embrace
Around the elm the vine doth cling.

Amid these shades so calm and still,
All things partake of my delight —
Fresh turf, fair sky, transparent rill,—
Ah! can you know she comes to-night?

THE ADIEU.

FROM CASSIMIR DELAVIGNE.

The brigantine
  Rolls by the strand,
To bear me from
  My native land.
O virgin Queen!
  I turn to you:
Adieu, dear scene—
  Provence, adieu!

When blows the gale,
  My sire will see
My mother's cheek
  Grow pale for me.
O virgin Queen!
  I turn to you:
Adieu, dear scene—
  My sire, adieu!

The old Helene
  Will trust, I'm sure,
Her nine days' prayer,
  And sleep secure.
O virgin Queen!
  I turn to you:
Adieu, dear scene,
  Helene, adieu!

My sister too
  Will say this morn—
"I've had a dream,
  He will return."
O virgin Queen!
  I turn to you:
Adieu, dear scene,
  Sister, adieu!

Thy glance, Isaure,
  Pursues my track;
Thy kerchief white
  Invites me back!
O virgin Queen!
  I turn to you:
Adieu, dear scene,
  Isaure, adieu!

Thou blowest, breeze,
  How harsh of thee,
When my Isaure
  Would speak to me!
O virgin Queen!
  I turn to you:
Adieu, dear scene,
  And joy, adieu!

EVENING.

FROM MADAME DESBORDES VALMORE.

In vain the morn,
In purple born,
Proclaims a day
For Love's sweet sway;
In thoughts of thee
The hours will flee,
But I must grieve
'Till silent eve.

The morning flies,
But leaves the skies
Its golden hue,
And cloudless blue;
Love riseth late,
For him I wait,
But I must grieve
'Till silent eve.

Come, happy night,
With quicker flight;
The sweet hour lead
With lightning speed;

Day doth appear
A long, long year,
When one must grieve
'Till silent eve.

On field and wall
The shadows fall,
And labours close
In sweet repose.
Oh! joy!—I hear
His footstep near;
No more I grieve
For silent eve.

TRUTH.

FROM MILLEVOYE.

Down from the skies an unknown virgin came,
Timid and chaste, though fair as if the zone
Of Venus bound her:—Truth was her sweet name.
All men pursued this beautiful unknown,
And some had almost seized upon her charms;
But short the triumph of the amorous crowd;
This second Juno vanished from their arms,
And left these new Ixions but—a cloud!

Italian.

TO DORIS.

FROM GIAMBATISTA CASTI.

Gentle Doris, timely prudent,
Leave those dull pursuits behind,
Over which, a lovely student,
Thou dost torture sight and mind;
Why thus spend the time of gladness—
Life's bright morn, that flies so fast—
In a strange and subtle madness,
Which will weary you at last?
To thee, of what importance is it,
The transit of a star, or so?
Or if this truth e'er paid a visit
To learned people long ago?
What madness to be ever seeking
The causes of all wondrous things?
Or whence the glancing light that's streaking
The northern ices proudly springs?
Or if the air be simply lighted
By the sun's reflected ray,
Or the solar beam ignited
By the phosphor light of day?

Or if the light ethereal springeth
From the burning torrid zone?
Or to either pole it wingeth—
Gloomy regions chill and lone?
Or what mystic bond of union
Blendeth in one human frame,
In a sacred sweet communion,
Soul and body, earth and flame?
Why the slightest motion stealing
Makes the muscles start so much?
Why the tendons have no feeling,
Even at the roughest touch?
How the nerves' minute sensation
Carries to the inner soul
All the wonders of creation,
From the Tropics to the Pole?
Mute, astonished, stand I gazing,
Lovely Doris, upon thee—
Oft my eyes in wonder raising
How it possibly can be,
That, thus rich in life's best treasures,
Youth and beauty, power to please,
Thou shouldst leave its sweetest pleasures
For such subtle thoughts as these!
When I would, by passion hurried,
In thy presence breathe my cares,
Ever do I find thee buried
Amid circles, lines, and squares!
Then with crystal convex glasses
Thou dost arm thy own bright eyes,

Wasting time that swiftly passes,
Sagely scrutinizing flies!
Or the magnet's operation
Doth fill up the precious hour,
Or the pendulum's vibration,
Or the weight's suspended power.
Science with its dim revealings,
Leave, oh! leave, my Doris bright,
Or you'll lose your heart's best feelings,
And your mind's divinest light!
Let them toil, for ever, over
Wretched books in heat and cold,
They whose chins the down doth cover,
Or the strong beard doth enfold!
Or those others, pale and meagre,
Round whom fate a net hath drawn!
They who labour constant, eager,
All the hours from day to dawn.
Doris, do not thou dispute on
Laws the wisest scarce have known—
Do not thou oppose to Newton
Novel systems of thine own.
Never will the Tuscan beauties
See thee rise with solemn air,
And discharge the lecturer's duties
In the grave professor's chair.
Why to painful toils enslave thee?
Still my wildered spirit asks,
When, my Doris, nature gave thee
Lighter labours, gentler tasks.

Ever should thy voice be sweetest
In the merry notes of song;
Ever should thy foot be fleetest
When the dancers flit along;
Or the cymbal's voice awaking,
As your rapid fingers stray,
Most harmonious music making,
Sweetly solemn, gently gay!
Or thou mayest sweetly chatter,
In the soft Parisian tongue,
About any graceful matter
Fit for one so fair and young.
Be it, too, thy pride to bathe thee
In our old poetic springs,
In the majesty array thee
Of our mighty minstrel kings;
History, too, has stores of meaning,
Every page with wisdom rife,
There thou canst be ever gleaning
Knowledge of our varied life!
If my Doris were but giving
All her mind to tasks like these,
Not a gentle lady living
But she might surpass with ease.
Seek not labours from a distance,
Nearer tasks thou may'st discern,
Arts that sweetly lend assistance
Unto nature thou canst learn:—
How to braid your silken tresses
With the most bewitching air,

Foreign fashions, graceful dresses—
  These to study—those to wear.
For it were unjust to heaven,
  As thy grateful heart must feel,
If the charms that it has given
  Thou shouldst darken or conceal.
Thus, my Doris, ever gaining
  Grace from all those simple arts,
Soon thou wilt be proudly reigning
  Queen of willing minds and hearts.
If the knowledge thou hast tasted
  Still allures thy vain pursuit,
All thy spring-time will be wasted,
  And thy autumn without fruit.
Then, since every pleasure woos thee,
  Can thy bosom yet be steeled?
Youth attends thee—joy pursues thee—
  Yield! my gentle Doris, yield!
Leave the pedant's mouldy coffers;
  Turn to tasks more bright and fair;
Seize the good that fortune offers,
  Since 'twere vain to seek elsewhere.

CONTENTMENT.

FROM GIAMBATISTA CASTI.

With roses and myrtle my brow be arrayed hence,
Bind the bright fillet band, young men and maidens;
Sing to me! dance to me! mingle together
Lips full of melody, feet like a feather!
Accents of jubilee—visions to fire me,
Grant me, Anacreon!—Pindar inspire me!
Let the verse flow from my lips' severed portals,
Sweet as the nectar that cheers the immortals!
Since Amaryllis, my joy and my treasure,
The light of my eye, and my heart's only pleasure,—
She who was hitherto coy and disdainful,
Mocked at my sufferings ever so painful,—
Vainly, in weeping, I knelt to adore her,—
Oh! what a happy change now has come o'er her!
Lately she said what my bosom entrances,
Fix'd on my face were her innocent glances—

"If thou dost love me well, know I am feeling
Love in my heart for thee, silently stealing;"
Then my long torments of sighing and sorrow
Fled at her words like the night from the morrow!
And from her sphere on high, silver beams scattering,
Venus look'd down on me, all my hopes flattering!

Then from my tranquil mind fled all annoyance,
Happy my heart became, boundless its joyance;
Brighter the day in its sunny zone bound me,
Sweeter the common air wanton'd around me!
Thus the few moments can banish the fears,
And dry up the eyes that were weeping for years,
And as in the day fades the night's pallid crescent,
So the memory of pain in the joy of the present!
But since, Amaryllis, I know that thou art
The light of my eye and the joy of my heart,
I fear not the whirlwinds of fate hanging o'er,
Nor the shadows of gloom on Death's terrible shore.
Let me pass, kind gods, through life's calm ways,
With my sweet Amaryllis, my tranquil days.
No boon but this only I ask you to grant,
No more do I sigh for, no more do I want;
For never a moment my bosom sighed
For the empty pageants of pomp and pride,
Nor brilliant dreams has my fancy scann'd
Of the gems and gold of the Indian land!
Let fair Adonis have Venus bright,
And the Latmian Boy the Queen of Night;
And Phrygian Paris I envy not
The lovely Helen so dearly bought;
Oh! not for a thousand nymphs divine,
Would I change, Amaryllis, one glance of thine;
Sweet as the nectar that Venus sips,
Do thy praises fall from my rapid lips!
Oh! ye bright spirits of woods and vales,
Gentle zephyrs, and balmy gales,

Stay! oh stay! your tremulous flight,
And list to my song of strong delight!
Ye birds that sing on the summer bough,
Ye murmuring streams, be silent now!
That my verse may fall from my rapid lips
Sweet as the nectar that Venus sips!
Love does not hold in his realm divine
A happier heart than this of mine!
Content doth fill it so full and well,
That pain can never within it dwell.
Oh! happy the life that in love I lead,
And pleasant the flames on my heart that feed!
Oh! Amaryllis, a charm there lies
In the tremulous depths of thy laughing eyes;
On my bosom falls their gentle light,
Filling it all with a calm delight.
From thee alone the rapture flows,
The strong delight, that my bosom knows!
For this I will learn what life can give,
For this I will think it a joy to live;
And ye, who on love attentive wait,
Who hear the song of my happy fate,
Since Amaryllis has laid aside
Her scornful air and her look of pride,
Graceful youths and maidens fair,
With myrtle and rose come bind my hair;
Let the envious slaves of love revere
In me a being to Venus dear;
And, ye lovers, learn this truth from me—
True love will ever a victor be!

ANACREONTIC.

FROM GIAMBATISTA CASTI.

Not for me the song elated
Of armed hosts and crimson strife,
By the tender mother hated,
Hated by the gentle wife.
Not for me,—though nature forces,
With her charms, my heart to glow,—
Not for me to seek the sources
Whence her hidden wonders flow?
Placid mind and frolic humour
Have the good gods given to me,
And beneath my mask of gloom are
Laughing looks of mirth and glee.
I wish of Doris and of Phillis
To sing a strain devoid of art
(Natural as the mountain rill is,
Pleasing to the gentle heart).
Ebon glances, golden tresses,
Gentle loves and coy disdain,
Pensive feelings, soft caresses,
All can study without pain!
Lovely ladies, ye who listen
To my verses' varied tone,

If your eyes approving glisten,
'Tis for that I sing alone.
Let him treasure, justly jealous,
That majestic trump of yore,
He who sung the chiefs of Hellas,
Buried by the Zanthian shore;
Neither do I seek alliance
With such minds as are not loth
To unite sweet song and science,
Sacrificing one or both!
All on which my fond heart lingers,
All to which my hopes aspire,
Is to tune with skilful fingers
Sweet Anacreon's simple lyre!
Dulcet notes and sportive measures
Hover o'er each trembling string,
All the joys and all the pleasures
That fron Love and Bacchus spring.
May I, too, discharge my duty,
May I sing a worthy chant,
Full of grace and full of beauty,
As the gods alone can grant!
So that, never dim or dreary,
May my easy line be fraught,
Or the mind grow dull and weary
With its weight of misty thought.
Fancy then may build her dwelling,
Tranquil daughter of the brain!—
In the gentle fount-like welling
Of my soft and facile strain.

Ladies, heaven of my devotion,
Do not think I wish to claim,
O'er the mountain or the ocean,
Fame or honour for my name.
For mighty bards and heroes spring
Wreaths and crowns, and laurels bright:
Ladies, if I write or sing,
'Tis for you I sing and write!

TO PHILLIS.

FROM GIAMBATISTA CASTI.

Oh! my sweet Phillis, thou who art long
The joy of my heart and the muse of my song,
See the pale merchant, so needlessly brave,
Daring the tempest and tempting the wave,
In his light vessel, by night and by day,
Ever pursuing his perilous way,
Gathering ever his harvest of gain
From the lone islanders over the main.
Look at this other, whom Ceres leads
Over the ridges to scatter the seeds.
List to the prayer of that anxious swain,
For the harvest time and the ripening grain.
Another toils 'neath helm and shield,
Fighting the foe on the bloody field,

Winning a puff of honour's breath,
At the mighty venture of blood and death.
This man studies some light to draw
From the musty volumes of crabbed law.
And that other bends with the weight of cares,
Of the kingdom's weal and of state affairs;
I, while I breathe Apollonian strains
To the ivory lute of Etruscan plains,
And while I know not of misery's frown,
Or squalid poverty weighs me down,
Heave not a sigh for such splendid thrall
As the countless treasures of Crœsus' hall;
Ne'er shall you see me, by cares possest,
Loosing the peace of my tranquil breast,
Nor running on to a doubtful prize,
The tardy fruit of a thousand sighs.
Place me afar amid Scythian snows,
Or where the sand of the desert glows,
Or the city's noise or the haunts of trade,
Or the tranquil scene of some woodland glade;
Ever most happy shall be my fate
While I live in the golden middle state:
While in flattering dreams my fancy strays,
Pass, O Phillis! my flying days,
Thinking each moment a worthless thing
That bears not peace on its rapid wing.
If Phillis only will hear my sighs,
And grant me the light of her lovely eyes,—
If love but teach me the lyrist's art,
And song—the voice of the joyful heart,—

Though age may come with his wintry airs,
And scatter the snow on my silver hairs,
From the verdant marge of the Tuscan fount,
Full of the God shall my spirit mount;
Often amid the lyric throng
Shall you hear me weave the well-known song,
The dulcet tone and the thrilling fire,
The harmonious sound of my Teian lyre;
And thou, O Phillis! shalt still remain
The inspiring cause of my happy strain!

THE VOYAGE OF LOVE.

FROM CARLO INNOCENZO FRUGONI.

WHERE the sea encircles bright
Cyprus dear to Aphrodite,
Near the margin of the tide
I saw a fairy vessel ride.
Her oars and sails of rosy hue
Flashed along the waters blue,
And as shines Apollo's brow
Golden gleamed her poop and prow.
There, in life-like colours, glowed
The snow-white bull Europa rode;
There the swan of dazzling sheen,
There the shower of gold was seen.

Sculptured on her bulwarks gay,
A shepherd seemed the god of day;
Sculptured there were Vulcan's wiles,
And the captive queen of smiles!
The silvery sail-yards wreathéd o'er,
Small ivory lutes suspended bore,
And, 'mid flowers of thousand charms,
Hung an elfin archer's arms!
On the crystal water lay,
From a torch of deathless ray,
Gentle beams which guide her flight
Through the darkness of the night.
"Who owns this fairy bark?" I cried.
"'Tis his," a beauteous form replied,
"Who, laughing, rules each sportive scene,
The wingéd joy of Cypria's Queen!
Now in conquering state he sails,
Proud before the western gales;
Now again, a pirate, he
Flieth to the Eastern sea;
'Mid a group of blooming boys,
Now he feels the steersman's joys,
While obsequious zephyrs trip
Round about the fairy ship.
Never comes the tempest near him,
Clouds and winds and rains revere him.
Gazing in his Psyche's eyes,
O'er the azure deep he flies.
Wouldst thou come on board and see?—
Courteous Love permitteth thee.

Hither, when their deeds were o'er,
Came the mighty chiefs of yore!"
Quick I climbed that vessel fair,
And the God received me there,
Saying—"Gentle bard, for thee
Have I lingered in this sea.
Come with me and I will guide
Thy destined course across the tide,
At the fated spot thou'lt prove
All the pleasant pains of love."
He smiling turned, and spoke no more,
And, as he ceased, we left the shore;
Soon was lost that island green,
Nought but sea and sky were seen.
What wonders then did I behold?—
The diamond prow of Nereus old,
With the Tritons in his train,
Gliding o'er the foamy main.
Then Love whispered in my ear,
"Spirit to Apollo dear,
Do not thou deny my prayer,
Lend the lute that now you wear."
He took and gazed upon the lyre,
With ready hands he fixed each wire,
Which had in the Grecian land
Trembled to Anacreon's hand.
"Why wouldst thou sing?" he spoke again,
"Of clashing arms and warlike men?
Sing alone the heaven that lies
In raven locks and jet black eyes."

Then he twined around my head
A dewy wreath of roses red,
And—the golden plectrum seized—
Placed my fingers as he pleased.

At length no more the vessel flew,
And busy worked her wingéd crew;
Some amid the cordage flying,
Some the rosy canvass tying.

"We have reached the happy shore,"
Joyful Love said o'er and o'er:
"Here is all my chiefest treasure,
'Tis the happy isle of Pleasure."

When he touched the sacred isle
Hills and vales were seen to smile,
As in spring's awakening showers,
Dimpled o'er with countless flowers.

Through this happy, blest abode
Crystal streams meandering flowed,
And the ring-dove to his spouse
Coo'd among the shady boughs.

When the Nymphs my vision blest,
One more fair than all the rest
Looked as doth the silvery moon
Among the twinkling stars of June.

Her archéd brows were darkly fair,
And darkly curled her raven hair,
Darkly gleamed her eye of light
O'er a face of tenderest white.

When a momentary smile
Would ope her coral lips awhile,

What a treasure shone beneath
In her smooth and pearly teeth!
While I stood in mute amaze,
Fixing there my wondering gaze,
Through my heart an arrow sped,
And the traitor god thus said:
"Companion of my voyage, thou
By Fate's decree must anchor now;
With happy lovers wilt thou here
Sweetly pass each flying year."
In vain for freedom then I strove,
For freedom flies the realm of Love;
And at length I, trembling, prayed
To the wingéd god for aid.
"Simpleton!—the nymph divine
Yonder stands where roses twine;
'Tis for thee she lingers there,
Vain your wish and vain your prayer!"
He spoke, his pinions fanned the gale,
His fairy bark again set sail;
In that hour commenced the reign
Of all my pleasure, all my pain!

AUTUMN.

FROM CARLO INNOCENZO FRUGONI.

Leafy Autumn—time entrancing!
  Would that thou couldst ever shine,
On the glad earth's bosom dancing,
  With thy children—Love and Wine!

Welcome to the golden weather,
  Lovely Cloris, nymph divine,
Which invites us out to gather
  The blushing honours of the vine!

Take a knife and basket fair,
And the shortest robe you wear;
Come, then, where the vine-twigs grow,
And the vintage treasures glow!

Bare and widowed, see the vines,
  Stand of all their clusters reft!—
Every eye approving shines,
  Every heart applauds the theft.

See the vineyard's trampled pride,
How it yields the ruby tide!—
How its crimson drops impart
Joy to every eye and heart!

See the frolic shepherd swain,
With his face all crimson dyed,
Laughing flies across the plain,
From his cottage maiden's side.

Without Bacchus Love doth languish,
Bacchus soothes the lover's anguish,
Softly kindling in his face,
More of ardour, more of grace!

Even the rustic maiden feels
All her coy disdain depart,
When the joyous poison steals
Softly through her melting heart!

To drink is joy, to drink is life;
Wine drowns the pangs of mental strife;
With Bacchus comes the mind's relief,
From Bacchus flies the demon grief!

Come and round your silken hair,
Let the tender vine leaves tremble;
Let your hands a liquor bear,
Which the ruby doth resemble!

Let us follow, lovely Cloris—
Let us join the Bacchic chorus,
And the God of joy and peace
Will our mutual flame increase!

Leafy Autumn—time entrancing!
Would that thou couldst ever shine,
On the glad earth's bosom dancing,
With thy children—Love and Wine!

THE ISLE OF LOVE.

FROM CARLO INNOCENZO FRUGONI.

The fairy bark is ready, and by the shore is moored;
Ye Fair! the pilot Cupid inviteth ye on board.
See!—see!—the anchor stirs, amid the waters dark,
And the little wingéd mariners are eager to embark!

Of purple are her sails, which tremble in the breeze,
And Laughter is the captain bold, who guides her through the seas.
The enamoured air floats round, with sportive wing and lip,
And swells the silken canvass, and moves the gallant ship!

Her sail-yards are of silver, divinely laboured o'er,
And art has lent a thousand charms, even to the precious ore;
Her poop is all of ivory, and ebony, and gold,
Where Pleasure sits with Beauty, and dares the voyage bold.

Hope the rudder rules, and round in circles sweet
Move the soft Desires their many-twinkling feet,
A hundred coy allurements pace that vessel grand,
And Faith and constant Servitude go joyful hand in hand!

Garlands of sweet flowers, vermilion, white, and blue,
In fragrant wreaths, adorn her sides of glossy hue;

And sits the God of Joy mid busts and paintings fair,
Odorous roses twining around his golden hair!

Beneath the haughty vessel, as if inflamed with love,
Proud of their beauteous burden, the friendly billows move.
The fish within the wave, the rocks upon the shore,
With joy perceive the present God, and lovingly adore!

Love opes his rosy mouth, and at the sounds divine
The noisy winds are silent, the Heavens serenely shine.
To listen to his voice the sea nymphs leave their home,
With snow-white breasts uprising above the curling foam!

"To sea!" he cried, "to sea!—ye Fair who crowd the beach!—
Oh! come with me and learn the arts which Love can teach.
Not far an island lies where flowers and blossoms shine,
Where simple hearts are trying this wondrous art of mine!"

He ceased, and blooming Phillis, and Galatea dark,
And snow-white Nerea, climbing, crowd that little fairy bark;
And Doris, Nisa, Cloris, too, and many more beside,
While quick as thought the vessel flies across the sparkling tide.

They reach the happy shore, and first to meet them came
A form whom Love could never please, and Shyness was her name;
And cold Repulses, too, who shun the torch of fire,
And by their opposition increase the fond desire.

Then Pity, bashful maid, before the band arose,
And spoke with mournful sweetness of wretched lovers' woes.

She spoke of waking nights, of tears that vainly fall,
And praised their pure fidelity and constancy o'er all.

Tenderness then came, and with her gentle sighs,
Some vivid sparks enkindled within their weary eyes;
And in their willing bosoms, down creeping from above,
She silent lit a thousand fires, and counselled them to love!

Last came Deception's form, who, looking in their eyes,
Said, "Gentle ladies, listen unto advice more wise;
If haply thou shouldst love, the burning secret screen
Under a varying aspect, now cruel, now serene.

"When most securely dreaming thy lover's bosom glows,
With feigned displeasure wake him from his too sweet repose;
The wretch will then lament, and pine with inward pain,
And of your sudden anger will ask the cause in vain!

"Let him fear the ancient fire now cold and conquered lies,—
That, within your breast extinguished, the growing ardour dies;
And let that fervid flame that in his breast you light,
By fear increase and burn more vividly and bright!

"Then when he looks around, and his soul with care's oppress'd,
And when Hope, the heart's sweet poison, dieth within his breast,
Then with a sudden sweetness let thy pitying glances beam,
Through his troubled bosom shining quick as the lightning's gleam."

He said, and the Nymphs attentive list to his subtle lay,
While a tremulous smile was seen over each face to play;

Then, following their wingéd guide through many a shady grove.
They learn the thousand wiles and the unknown laws of love.

Returning through that isle they try that wondrous power,
Which from the subtle god they learned in evil hour.
Doris makes Corilus pine, for Nisa her Tytyrus dies,
While I for the beautiful Phillis heave unavailing sighs!

CANZONE AMOROSA.

FROM MATTEO MARIA BOIARDO.

As in a clear and liquid night
The star of Love precedes the day,
So lustrous shines its golden light,
It paints the Heavens with diamond ray!
And, following in her starry train,
The lesser lights that rule the sky
To her resign the azure plain,
And all in twinkling homage vie;
And from the planet's humid hair—
Its humid hair of silvery beams—
A dewy freshness fills the air,
And bathes the flowers and gilds the streams!
Thus *she* o'er all obtains the prize,
For Love beside her ever seems,
And makes all loveliest things grow dull beside her eyes.

He who has seen Aurora rise,
With roses and with hyacinth crowned,
Ere Phœbus gilds the eastern skies,
Or paints the dewy landscape round,
Has marked how dazzlingly and bright
Each moment grows the orient blue,
When melts the stream of crimson light
Into a sea of scarlet hue!
The early shepherd, wondering, views
The golden morn's exhaustless mines
O'er all the world their wealth diffuse,
And looks the more the more it shines.
Such charms *her* angel face displays,
If thou couldst trace the living lines,
Or mortal eye could on such beauty gaze!

A CLOUDY DAY IN ENGLAND.

FROM G. ROSSETTI.

Oh! these nights how dark they are!
Without moon and without star,—
Every thing is in the blues!—
Sea and air, they groan together,
Just as if the wind and weather
Gruffly talked about the news!

But hail! my own Italian sky,
Where, twinkling with her diamond eye,
The Star of Eve is seen above!—
Where Heaven laughs down on Earth, and then
The Earth laughs up to Heaven again—
And all things breathe of Love!

But one thing mars the beauteous scene,
The flowery soil, and heaven serene—
Ah! me. Oppression's cruel hand,
My Italy, is on thy plains:
What cares the captive in his chains
For azure sky or verdant land?—

O happy England! potent bride
Of Him who rules the ocean tide—
'Tis true a mist o'erclouds thy sky,
But thou a better light canst give,
For which alone I wish to live—
The glorious light of Liberty!

Beyond the mist my thoughts take flight,
To seek that true and only light,
Which few can find, though all admire.
For this I've wandered far and near,
Until at length, in wandering here,
I find my long desire!

O Liberty!—upon whose breast
Man can alone securely rest,
Amid these mists resplendent shine
The MIND to know—the HEART to feel—
Twin stars that make the wanderer kneel,
And worship at thy shrine:

THE PILGRIM, THE CAVALIER, AND THE TROUBADOUR.

FROM A. MAFFEI.

THE PILGRIM.

She was mild as is the sky
When gently smiles the sun of May;
She was lovely as the ray
That clothes a cherub round.
Ah! me, for ever from mine eye
The sacred veil that maid hath torn;
Now life is but a waste forlorn,
Whereon no path is found!

THE CAVALIER.

I fought for ten long weary years
With Saracenic rage malign;
My name throughout all Palestine
Made dim the mother's eye;
I conquered squires and cavaliers,
But, Love, unconquered still thou art:
Back to the Lady of my heart
Returns my constant sigh.

THE TROUBADOUR.

I sang of many a glorious feat
Enacted on the fields of fame;
The Lion-hearted Richard's name
Resounded bold and free:
But ah! the strain more sadly sweet
Flew back to those belovéd eyes,
Between whose light and mine there lies
So much of sky and sea.

THE THREE.

Without love no light doth shine,
To guide the Pilgrim on his way;
Without Love the wreath of bay
Twines sharply round—a thorny band;
Without Love, the flower divine
Hath none to cherish or admire;
Sweetness flies the Poet's lyre,
And skill the Poet's hand.

Spanish.

ROMANCE OF MALECA[149].

In Purchena Malec waiteth, gates are closed, portcullis down,
Longing to obtain some tidings from Galera's leaguered town;
And one day amid his council, formed of many a Moorish chief,
Thus with sighs proclaimed his wishes—thus expressed his bosom's grief:—

"Much I long to know the tidings from Galera's leaguered town,
Whether its strong walls are standing, or have tumbled headlong down.
I will give as wife my sister,—she, the beautiful and small,—
Unto him who seeks Galera, and, returning, tells me all.

"If 'tis taken or not taken—if 'tis hopeful or appalled—
For within it dwells my sister, she who is Maleca called;
She, of all Granada's maidens, fairest, brightest, gentlest one,
There is visiting her kindred—would to heaven she ne'er had, gone!"

Then a Moorish youth, advancing, spoke with rapture in his eyes:—
"I will go upon this journey, for so great and fair a prize;

Seven long years I've woo'd thy sister, with a fond and faithful love—
Ah! how faithful and how tender, let this hidden picture prove!"

Then from out his breast the picture forth with trembling hands he drew,
And the fair face of the maiden flashed upon the gazer's view;
Flashed as doth the star of evening through the rosy twilight skies,
With the beauty, and the candour, and the magic of her eyes!

And the Moorish youth retiring waited for the dawn of day,
Then from out Purchena sallied, on a steed of dapple grey.
On his feet were yellow buskins, all with silken sandles twined,
Shield and spear he bore before him, and a short sword hung behind.

And a firelock hung suspended from his right-hand saddle bow,
Which the Moor in fair Valencia learned to manage long ago.
Forth along the wild Sierra, through the dusk, he wandered thence,
Fearing not the Christian forces, now that Love is his defence.

When at length the sun had risen o'er the morning vapours damp,
In the fields about Huescar he beholds the Christian camp.
For the night he waits in Orca, there conceals his dapple grey,
And through darkness to Galera by a footpath takes his way.

From the clouds the rain was falling, from the Heavens the snow
came down,
In the pitchy dark of midnight did he reach the fated town.
Ruined walls were strewn around him, bloody corses strewed
the ground,
And the house of his Maleca cannot in the dusk be found.

Oh! the anguish of that moment—oh! the bitterness to wait
'Till the slow-returning daylight would reveal the dear one's
fate.
Is she dead?—or rudely captured by some ruffian soldier horde?
She, the beautiful and gentle!—she, the worshipped and adored!

When at length the dawn of morning glimmered through the
lonely street,
To the house of his belovéd turned the Moor his trembling feet.
In the court-yard Moorish corses, men and women, blocked the
way,
And—oh! bitter, bitter sorrow—there the fair Maleca lay!

Like a lily in a garland twined of dusky autumn flowers,
Like a silver beech-tree shining in the midst of gnarled bowers,
Like the young moon's pearly crescent, seen beside a rain-filled
cloud,
Thus the fair, the dead Maleca lay amid the swarthy crowd![150]

Then the Moor with tears down pouring for this foulest crime
of crimes,
Pressed her in his sad embraces, kissed her lips a thousand
times;

Cried aloud—"Oh! coward Christian, thou who quenched this
beauteous sun,
Dearly, dearly, by Mohammed, shalt thou pay for what thou'st
done."

Then he hollowed out the narrow house where all that live must
dwell,
Piled the cold earth on her bosom, took his long, his last fare-
well;
Smoothed the ground around, lest prying eyes the new-made
grave might trace,
Then inscribed their names together on the white walls of the
place.

From that mournful scene departing, slowly, sadly, turned the
Moor,
Found his steed again at Orca, passed unnoticed and secure;
Reached Purchena, where to Malec he revealed his tale of pain,
How he found Galera taken, and his beauteous sister slain.

ROMANCE OF ZAIDE.

Zaide, if thy boastful bearing
Manly worth but truly token,—
It thou canst make good in action
What thy braggart lips have spoken,—
If with foemen thou canst combat,
As with women thou dost prattle,

Not more active in the Zambras[151],
Than on horseback in the battle,—
If, as in the mimic tournay,
Thou canst bear the crash of lances,
Wave the scimitar as deftly
As the light scarf in the dances,—
If thou art as skilled in warfare
As in smiles when dames pass by thee,
And apply thyself to combats
As to feasts thou dost apply thee,—
If, like silken summer raiment,
Thou the shining armour wearest,
And the shrill sound of the trumpet
Like the lute's sweet sound thou hearest,—
If, as in the sunny pastime,
Where so well the canes[152] thou throwest,
Thou upon thy foe canst trample,
When unto the field thou goest,—
If the daring that thou vaunted
In my absence, thou not lackest,—
Come! as readily defend thee,
As in the Alhambra thou attackest!
If alone thou wilt not venture,
As is he who waits to meet thee,
Bring whatever friends thou pleasest,
If such aid be not beneath thee.
For true caballeros never
Trust the tongue, nor weakly mutter,
In a palace, or 'mid women,
Where the hands must nothing utter:

But the hands can here speak boldly,—
Come and see how he had spoken
If the presence of his monarch
Let the silence then be broken!
With such anger, with such fury,
Thus the Moor Al-Tarfe writeth,
That the pen cuts through the paper
In whatever place it lighteth.
Calling then his page, he speaketh—
"When the Alhambra you arrive at,
To the Moor called Zaide wending,
This from me present in private:
Tell him that I wait his coming
In the citron-shaded alley,
Where Xenil's translucent water
Wanders through the pleasant valley."

THE BEE.

FROM MARTINEZ DE LA PLAZA.

In a bower, a garland wreathing,
My belovéd sat reclining,
Sweetest roses intertwining;
She, ere they were bound in posies,
Pressed them to the kindred roses
Of her lips with fragrance breathing.

A Bee within a rose was lying,
Him the crimson leaves concealing,

While the nectar he was stealing;
As her lips approached, upspringing,
He the seeming rosebud stinging,
Sipped its sweets, then vanished flying!

THE SHADE OF THE LEAVES.

The wind murmurs round,
As the bough gently heaves;
And I sleep at the sound
In the shade of the leaves:—

My thoughts gently glide
Where the sweet zephyr bloweth,
As a light vessel floweth
Away o'er the tide;
And my senses are drowned
In the bright dews of heaven;
And the rapture is given
That so seldom is found
Where mortality grieves,
As I sleep at the sound
In the shade of the leaves.

'Mid the flowers still I rest:
If by chance I awaken,
Pain and sorrow have taken
Their flight from my breast;

They cannot be found
In the heart of the dreamer.
There is nought but the tremor,
The tranquil rebound
Of the bough, as it heaves,
While I sleep at the sound
In the shade of the leaves.

TO-DAY AND TO-MORROW.

When oppressed by Love's sweet sorrow,
At Juana's feet I pray,—
If I sigh and say—"To-day,"
She answers—"Oh! to-morrow!"

She weeps if any joy elates me;
If sad, she sings, and mirth comes o'er her;
And if I say that I adore her,
The cruel maiden says she hates me.
Whence then can I a solace borrow?
Except I die—and die I may—
For if I sigh and say—"To-day,"
She answers—"Oh, to-morrow!"

If, to see her eyes of brown,
I lift mine, she downward gazes;
But the maiden heavenward raises
Her's if also I look down.

At times, o'ercome by grief and sorrow,
I vow to break her sovereign sway,
But if I sigh, and say—"To-day,"
She answers—"Oh! to-morrow!"

At times, too, if I claim the prize
Of victory, she declares I'm beaten;
And if the cup of life I sweeten
With hopes of bliss beyond the skies,
She hints at brimstone and Gomorrha!
Even now, if in Death's arms I lay,
And sighing said, "I'll die to-day"—
She'd answer—"Oh, to-morrow!"

ROMANCE OF ABENAMAR.

So may time preserve the April
Of thy Hope—my faithful Maida—
If thou tellest to me truly
Where I may behold this *Z*aida.
She I mean, the beauteous stranger,
With her braided golden tresses;
She whose beauty all are speaking,
But whose grace no word expresses;
She, for whom the truant lover
Breaks his vows, and perjured gazes;

She whom all the Moorish nobles
Celebrate with glorious praises.
To the Mosque I go to seek her,
Seek her in the festal Zambra,
Through the shady Alameda,
Through the golden-roofed Alhambra.
Something ever dims my eye-sight,
Some enchantment doth enfold her,
So that day or night I never
Have been able to behold her.
Ah! my Maida, with full reason
Does the heart within me wither:
Since I came unto Granada—
Would that I had ne'er come hither!—
Since I came unto Granada—
Woe is me! unhappy lady!—
Soon as dusky night descendeth,
From me goeth my Alcaide;
And although he comes not homeward
Till the sun the blue zone blesses,
Well I know that he is weary
Of my greetings and caresses;
That he's weary to be with me,
Every silent look attesteth;
'Tis no wonder that he's weary,
When elsewhere so long he resteth.
When he's with me in the garden,
Or when he reposes nigh me,
Not alone are deeds then wanting,
But even words he doth deny me!

If I say—"My Life!"—he answers
Not as when he first did woo me!
But he says—"My dear!"—so coldly,
That like ice it freezes through me!
All my fondness he repelleth,
Either with impatient gesture,
Or he heeds it not, from being
Wrapped in thought, as in a vesture.
When I clasp his neck in fondness,
He his head and eyes inclineth,
And withdraws him from the circle
Of the arms which he untwineth.
All the time such sighs upheaving,
From the deep hell of his anguish,
That both kindle my suspicions,
And the flame with which I languish.
If the cause of this I ask him,
"Thou art it," he answers merely—
Falsely answers, as Heaven knoweth
That I still do love him dearly.
I offend him! *I* who ever
Feel Love's season fresh and vernal:
May he, for this false assertion,
Burn in flames of love eternal!
I—who never at my window
Have been seen my beauty showing,
Never sought the thrilling bull-fight,
Nor the games where canes were throwing;
Never where guitars were playing,
By the sighing crowd infested;

Never placed my conscious footsteps
Where suspicion's breath had rested:
Ever in my house remaining.
This Mohammed knows, that even
Had I not to please my husband,
I had still the law of Heaven!
But why waste more time in telling
Grief like mine?—Or why reveal it?
Since the cause of all this sorrow
You do know, and yet conceal it!
Do not swear!—I'll not believe you!
Women build on slight foundation,
When they rest Joy's golden fabric
On man's strongest protestation.
Men have ever been base traitors,
Falsehood is Love's first-born daughter;
Promises, when love expireth,
Vanish as if writ in water[153].
From the promise to fulfilment,
Ah! how long the way and weary!
Wretched inns beside the highway,
Darksome, desolate, and dreary!
Ah! my God, when I remember
All the burning vows he swore me!....
But, support me, gentle Maida,
For a faintness cometh o'er me!
In her arms she lieth fainting;
Vainly Maida seeks to calm her.
Thus spoke Adalifa, weeping,
Jealous of her Abenámar.

THE DOUBLE PAIN.

FROM EL VIZCONDE DE ALTAMIRA.

My heart doth own a double fear,
A double pain, a double sigh;
The one when you are absent, dear;
The other when you're by.

At seeing you, my heart doth mourn
With love that cannot find relief;
At missing you, my heart is torn
With all the bitter pangs of grief.

And now I shed the burning tear,
And now I heave the useless sigh:
The one when you are absent, dear;
The other, when you're by!

THE SOUND OF THE STREAMS.

FROM LOPE DE VEGA.

To the sound of the waters moving,
The birds 'mid the bright flowers sing,
Oh! sweet is the bliss of loving,
And sharp is jealousy's sting.

Through these woods, where tranquillity reigneth,
To the sound of the streams sonorous,
The birds in musical chorus
Sing of the bliss that paineth;
The water that never remaineth,
But runneth in crystal glidings,
Whispereth ever the tidings
That never the heart disdaineth.

To the sound of the waters moving,
The birds 'mid the bright flowers sing,
Oh! sweet is the bliss of loving,
And sharp is jealousy's sting.

The narcissus, in summer hours,
Love's splendour and glory weareth;
Dark jealousy never neareth
The pansy and violet flowers;
The waves by the sloping shores
Mingle in mute embraces,
And the sands, like bright-eyed faces,
Look up through the crystal pores!

To the sound of the waters moving,
The birds 'mid the bright flowers sing,
Oh! sweet is the bliss of loving,
And sharp is jealousy's sting.

The streams, Love's treachery singing,
Glide on, and from petal to petal,
On threads of the purest metal,
The delicate pearls are stringing.

Like flowers and thorns are springing
Love and jealousy ever;
And while with a sad endeavour
I sing of their sweets and stinging,

To the sound of the waters moving,
The birds 'mid the bright flowers sing,
Oh! sweet is the bliss of loving,
And sharp is jealousy's sting!

ROMANCE OF GAZUL.

'Twas the hour when through the Azure
Shone the star of Venus sparkling,
And the bright day's dusk opponent
Wrapped him in his mantle darkling,
When a Moor, like Rodamonte,
Armed with lance both sharp and weighty,
Rode across the plain of Xerez
By the crystal Guadalete,—
Rode where flows the winding river
(Wild with rage, but not unwary),
Till the Sea of Spain it enters
At the fair Port of Saint Mary.

On he rode in deep distraction,
For, although of birth and breeding,
His ungrateful lady left him,
For the gold that he was needing!
Left him for a richer rival,
And this night, with noise and revel,
Weds a hideous Moor—Alcaide
Of the Alcazâr of Seville.
Tenderly his wrong he waileth,
Tighter now his bridal reining;
While the plain around re-echoes
To the voice of his complaining.
"Heartless Zaida!—ah! more heartless
Than the sea that proud fleets swallows;
Colder, flintier, and harder
Than the mountain's rocky hollows!—
How couldst thou permit it, cruel?—
Oh! distraction!—oh! perdition!—
That a stranger hand should deck him
In my soul's best hope's fruition!
Round a gnarled trunk thou twinest,
Past conceiving! past believing!
Without fruitage, without flowerage,
Thine own tree deserted leaving!
Wilt thou leave Gazul the noble?
He the fondest!—he the truest!
Wilt thou wed with Albenzaide,
Whom till now thou scarcely knewest?
Ah! the poorer one thou takest,
And the truly rich thou losest,

Since the riches of the body
More than of the soul thou choosest;
But may Allah grant, thou traitress!
He may hate, and you adore him;
Jealous when he may be absent,
Restless when thou art before him.
Mayst thou not to sleep at night time,
Or to rest by day, be able;
May he in the bed abhor you,
And detest you at the table.
In the festivals and zambras
May your colours ne'er be blazing;
May you ne'er be let to see them,
Even from the windows gazing.
May disgrace pursue the wearer
(When with canes the shields are cloven)
Of the sleeve that thou hast broidered,
And the veil that thou hast woven.
May the cipher of a mistress
Be his badge, while thine he spurneth;
And be given to her the captives,
When from war he back returneth.
In the battle of the Christians
Be his death for ever dreading;
Would to Allah! that it happened
E'er your hands met at this wedding.
But if he doth thus abhor thee,
May you live long years together;
'Tis the greatest curse that mortals
From the angry Fates can gather!"

By this time he reached to Xerez,
In the night time, nigh belated—
Found the bridegroom's palace crowded,
Halls and walls illuminated,—
Saw the Moorish frontier servants,
Out and in, through doors and porches,
Pass along in rich apparel,
To and fro, with lighted torches!
Rising in his stirrups, quickly
He the bridegroom saw and knew him;
Hurled his long lance through the window,
And the weapon passed right through him.
All was tumult, all cried vengeance;
In his blood their lord lay bathéd:
But the Moor, his sword unsheathing,
Through them homeward passed unscathéd.

BY THE SHORES OF THE SEA.

FROM GONGORA.

The pride of our village is pining away;
But yesterday married, and widowed to-day;
To the red field of death she has seen him depart,
The light of her eye and the joy of her heart.
To her mother she turneth, and falls on her knee—
Let me weep for him, mother, by the shores of the sea.

Since you told me, dear mother, in Life's happy morn,
How brief were its roses, how sharp was its thorn;
Since my heart was made captive by him that is gone,—
Ah! short was the sunlight that over it shone!
Since a captive I languish, and *he* bears the key,
Let me weep for him, mother, by the shores of the sea.

My eyes have, with weeping, been red since the dawn,
Their sweet occupation of seeing is gone:
Henceforward no gladness can bring them delight,
No vision of beauty can make them grow bright;
Since he is at war who was peace unto me,
Let me weep for him, mother, by the shores of the sea.

Oh! do not restrain me or blame me, dear mother,
For vain is the one, and useless the other.
If love for your daughter your bosom doth hold,
Oh! let not your actions be cruel and cold:
Since to perish in silence far sadder would be,
Let me weep for him, mother, by the shores of the sea.

Ah! mother, dear mother, that breast were of stone,
That would feel not the sorrow and grief I have known:
The languor that kills me since *he* has gone thither—
To see the green years of my womanhood wither.
Then since blossoms no longer will bloom on Life's tree,
Let me weep for him, mother, by the shores of the sea.

German.

THE PLEIADES.

FROM EDWARD JAHNENS.

Seest thou on high, in heaven's clear evening blue,
The Pleiades outshining;
They who, with threads of brightest silver dew,
The flowers of earth are twining?
They wander slowly on their ordered way,
With mild, fond looks, like maidens' eyes when thinking,
Until they meet the Herald of the Day,
Then smiling fade away, adown the empyrean sinking!

The bold King Hako, pride-consumed,
Sat once on Northland's throne of old.
For him seven fairest daughters bloomed,
The brightest gems his crown did hold.
Such faces, fresh as morning skies,
Such forms, without a fault or stain,
Such gentle soul-illumined eyes,
Were never seen on earth again.

Returning from the Danish fight,
The King's victorious host passed on,
But first of all in fame and might
Seven noble warriors proudly shone.

Their souls were bound in death and dearth,
By nature's sacred, holiest bands;
They were the bravest knights on earth,
The fairest chiefs of all the lands!

The King, before his palace hall,
Looked proudly from his golden chair:
Around him stood his daughters all,
With beauteous looks and modest air;
Their linen robes, so snowy white,
Were girt with golden girdles rare,
Their arms were clasped with diamonds bright,
And pearls entwined their curling hair.

Best trophies of their valiant deeds,
Each soldier bloody arms displays;
The seven brave Ritters on their steeds
Must all admire, and wondering praise.
The royal maidens upward gaze.
While down the knights their glances turn;
A blush each gentle heart betrays,
The brothers' cheeks responsive burn!

Despite the warrior's glorious doom,
Despite the steel that gleams above,
Within the manliest heart will bloom,
The sweetest, tenderest flowers of love!
The beauteous maidens felt likewise
Soft cares that were till then unborn,
And gently heaved unnumbered sighs
From that fair evening till the morn!

Amid the silent garden gleams
The light of sleeping trees and flowers,
There, lost in love's delicious dreams,
They wander through the midnight hours.
No sleep through all that happy night
Seals up the brothers' watchful eyes;
Love is for them a guiding light
Which, once enkindled, never dies.

When comes the dawn on rosy wing,
The brothers don their shining steel;
They tread before the mighty king,
And at his feet respectful kneel.
With manly speech and earnest eyes
They own the bliss for which they sigh,
And swear, for that belovéd prize,
To live, to combat, and to die.

With serious tone the King replies—
"You seek a boon with dangers rife;
But Beauty is the Hero's prize,
His dearest wish and aim in life.
Go, like our sires, on danger's track,
And fight with pride, and conquer power,
And let each suitor bring me back
A kingdom for a bridal dower."

O'er each brave face the rapture glides:
"'Tis this, O King! our valour seeks;
Now guard for us our faithful brides,
For one short year and thirty weeks.

'Till then our knightly word we plight—
'Till then our promise shall remain—
Here we shall be, if in the fight
We lie not bloody, stark, and slain."

The seven went forth with rapid pace;
The squires their pawing coursers bring;
The knights, in leaving that sweet place,
Pass by the gardens of the King:
There softly opes the garden gate—
The garden walks and bowers are seen—
Within the royal maidens wait,
With sorrowing looks and mournful mien.

When many a mild and tearful glance,
When many a faithful sigh is paid,—
When many a kiss the fond lip grants,
And many a heartfelt vow is made,—
When many a throb escapes the heart,
And many a clasp doth press the hand,—
The sorrowing knights at length depart,
And wander forth through many a land.

A year of bitter grief goes by;
Retired and sad the maidens stay;
In gazing far with tearful eye
They pass each tardy-wingéd day.
They see the starry silver light
From bud to blossom trembling creep,
But pass the silent, holy night
In boding thoughts that make them weep.

The changeful moon doth wax and wane,
The appointed time is drawing near;
The near approach of bliss doth pain,
And thrill their hearts with hope and fear.
Down from their little chamber range
Their eyes o'er all the valley's track;
The moon and sunshine interchange,
But still the brothers come not back!

At length the latest morning glowed,
The birds sang sweet on branch and brake,
So silent lies each path and road,
Their throbbing hearts will surely break.
The morning fades, the daylight dies,
No bark is on the still sea foam;
With many a sigh they strain their eyes,
But, ah! the Knights return not home.

Within their little room they pine,
And one another's forms embrace;
In—glancing, gleams the white moonshine,
And falls upon each whiter face.
Their eyes, with weeping almost blind,
Stare through the silent dark serene;
Soon comes the early morning wind,
But still no messenger is seen.

Meanwhile came many a princely youth,
To ask the maidens from their sire;
The monarch pledged his royal truth
To serve them in their fond desire.

If on the last appointed day
Returns not back each valiant knight,
Then doth he promise yea or nay,
With them his daughter to unite.

Scarcely the dawn, with rosy flame,
Had kissed the mountain's topmost stone,
When at the King's command they came
Before their father's lofty throne:
They mildly kneel and humbly pray,
With sighs and tears that terror smothers,
At least until the close of day
That they await the Brothers.

The King replies, with look severe,
"Well, then, my word is plighted,
They must upon this day appear,
Or be for ever slighted."
The maidens hear their settled doom,
No other word is spoken,
But back into their little room
Return again heart-broken.

And hour runs quickly after hour,
The sun still rises yonder;
And up and down, from flower to flower,
From place to place they wander.
And now the sultry noon is nigh,
The mid-day vapour burneth—
The sun is in the evening sky,
But still no Knight returneth.

When now the last faint beam of day
Upon the wave is shining;
The maidens all their heads array;
Green wreaths of rue entwining;
And with white veils that hide the shower
Their burning eyes are weeping,
Upon the Castle's topmost tower
Their silent watch are keeping.

Thus through that long and weary night,
So look they for the Ritters;
And weep to see the crimson light
That in the Orient glitters.
Then drink they all the poison cup—
Love smiling round them hovers,
And makes each dying eye look up
Still fondly for their Lovers.

The fairest stars that deck the night
Are now that faithful seven!
They rule with mild and gentle light
All o'er the Northern Heaven.
They bathe the flowers and leaves with dew,
But find their lovers never:
They look for them from Heaven's high blue,
For ever and for ever!

THE ELF-KING O'DONOGHUE.

FROM ANASTIUS GRÜN.

Up from the sea the May-morn sun is springing,
Even as a queen from out her radiant bath,
Still to the waves her purple mantle clinging,
Painteth the floods that glow beneath her path;
There the tall hills, grown grey with countless ages,
Like white-haired menials, with her jewels stand;
Here the low hillocks, like obsequious pages,
Kneel at her feet, with flowers in every hand!
But what is this boils in the billows below,
Where the foam sparkles up like the flakes of the snow,—
Where, as if for a war-horse, the waters divide,
And the flashing of armour is seen o'er the tide?

On a white steed, with glittering state attended,
O'er the bright wave a youthful knight doth wind;
If by his side the war-sword hangs suspended,
Still round his brow the olive wreath is twined;
If there be terror in the shield he's wearing,
Love shines serenely from his mild warm eyes—
Now as the enemy of peace appearing,
And now its guardian angel from the skies.
His kingdom is hid 'neath the blue water's rim,
And for pleasures that pall not, oh! who is like him?
And, the peace of his home o'er the glad earth to fling,
Every year doth the hero come back with the spring.

Before all others, those to bliss he raiseth
Who in his peaceful pathway meet his sight;
Oh! happy he who in his blue eye gazeth,
Where love is kindled in its tranquil light;
There golden peace, Heaven's fairest blossom, bloometh;
There misery smiles, her mourning weeds forsook;
There pallid Death the form of life assumeth,
And weakness strength, before its wonder-look.
Oh! Friendship, thy garland that withers bring here—
Quick blossom the flowers in the spring of the year;
Oh! Sadness, bring hither thy heart's icy chain,
For the Elf-King is here who will rend it in twain.

Lo! there his train in snowy circles glancing,
Quick o'er the tide a pearly legion shoots;
Here fairest youths with flowery wreaths advancing;
There tender maidens bearing golden fruits—
While o'er the waves, amid the murmuring mountains,
Notes, like the breath of roses, steal along.
Ah!—'tis the spring-psalm of the welling fountains;
Ah!—'tis the Elfin's love-warmed magic song.
"Oh! mortal, look hither, no sight is like this,
For the Elf-King is here who doth offer you bliss.
The sun shineth lightly,—oh! bask in its beam!
And pleasure flows lightly,—oh! bathe in its stream!"

Here leaps the torrent from the hill-top o'er us,
There, the blue Heaven, the bluer violet seeks—
Here to the sun ascends the lark's wild chorus,
There rose to rose incline their glowing cheeks.

High in the clouds the hardy pine-tree swayeth;
Round the fair lily's crown new pearls are seen;
And even the grave its awful breast arrayeth,
In Life and Hope's immortal robe of green.
Now the voices are blent as the fairies pass by;
Now the whirlwind of song sweeps the earth and the sky;
But, alas! there's no mortal to hear the sweet song,
No mortal the lake's lonely margin along.

Now must the knight, among his train departing,
Seek once again his kingdom's crystal roof!
Once more his shield its flashing light is darting,
Once more his white steed paws with silver hoof.
In his stretch'd hand the proffered garland lieth,
From his kind lips the call doth float once more;
Ah!—now at length his searching eye descrieth
Two happy mortals on the blooming shore!
They are lovers who rest where the meadow grass plays,
On the face of each other enchanted they gaze,
On the eyes of each other their glances are bound,
And they see nothing else in the universe round.

The garland streams—they see no garland streaming;
The song resounds—they hear it not—'tis vain;
The knight's fair face with proffer'd bliss is beaming,
But now he sinks with all his fairy train.
Slowly they sink, sweet farewell notes each linketh;
Calm sound the ripples round each rock and cave;
But in each spot wherein a fairy sinketh,
Up springs a flowery island in the wave.

The lovers enraptur'd still rest on the shore,
And their bosoms with happiness beat as before,
And the gold of the heaven has been doubled in glow—
But they know not the cause and they never shall know.

THE ELFIN BRIDE.

FROM DE LA MOTTE FOUQUE.

GAILY the sun ascends his throne,
And gilds the dewy sod below;
"O youth! what chains thee to that stone,
Where cooling breezes blow?

"O Mourner!—from the new-lit skies
The darksome gloom hath ta'en its flight?
Methinks no sleep has blest thine eyes
Through all this weary night!

"And tears, thou valiant youth and true,
Have fallen upon this humid stone;
Or is it but the nightly dew
That down from Heaven hath flown?"

"The dew would show its wonted care,
And weep on my belovéd stone;
But ah! the pearls that glisten there
Are but my tears alone!"

"A noble hero!—and in tears?
A brave young man—and weakly pine?
Oh, come where gleams the sheen of spears,
And Love's warm glance divine!"

"Let others kneel at Beauty's throne,
Or up the gleaming falchion take;
For me—I tarry by this stone
Until my heart will break!"

"Oh! tell me, then, thy heart's deep woe—
What sorrow chains thee to the stone?"
"Ah! yes, from lips the tale will flow,
That speak of this alone!—

"Last night I crossed the mountain near,
And sought this verdant vale of rest,
A sweet voice whispered in mine ear,
A sweeter lip to mine was prest!—

"It was a beauteous Fairy form,
That thus about the wanderer played,
And twined a garland bright and warm
Around us twain, that ne'er can fade.

"She called me her belovéd Lord—
She called herself a wife's dear name;
And gave to me, with glad accord,
Her wondrous sweet and tender frame.

"That moment did the Night withdraw
Her vaporous veil so dark and damp;
As through the roof of leaves we saw
The Moon suspend our nuptial lamp.

" And as it paled before the day,
And sank amid the silent sea,
She reached her hand and cried—' Away!
Belovéd, hence! from me!

" ' Hence!—hence!—for ere the sun has smiled,
I too must far from this have flown:
One beam on me, the Fairy Child,
Would turn me into stone.

" ' For this, through Time's unnumber'd years,
Has been the Sun's unquestioned right;
But till the Morning-red appears,
The Fairy People rule the night!'

" Audacious boy! Oh! sad event!
I prayed, and kissed her thousand charms,
Until she, weeping, gave consent
To linger still within my arms:

" But through her tears she sang this strain:—
' Ah! many and many a happy night
Might I within thy arms have lain!
If thou didst not that promise blight.

" ' I cannot bring my lips to speak
Denial to that prayer of thine,
And see! upon the purple peak
The day begins so shine!

" ' Farewell, belovéd murderer mine,
Farewell! thy clasping arms unbind!'—
Scarce shrieked I " Fly!" when came the Shine,
When came the cooling morning wind.

" There in my very hands she grew
A lifeless stone, so hard and cold;
There from my heart the life-blood flew,
And strength grew weak, and youth grew old.

" A lifeless stone!—O bitter woe!
My joy! my grief! my Elfin Bride!
On it, through life, my tears shall flow—
In death I'll sleep beside!"

DEATH AND THE DOCTOR.

FROM LESSING.

Brothers, hear my dreadful story—
Yesterday, in all my glory,
Drinking of the vine-juice free,
Death, my brothers, came to me!

Threat'ning, swung he round his sickle,
Down my cheeks the tears did trickle;
" Toper! hence, thou'st drank enough!"
Spoke that grisly phantom gruff.

Then I, weeping, cried—" Dear Death,
Why thus covet thou my breath?
See, the wine is standing with thee,
Drink, dear Death, and spare me, prithee!"

Laughing, seized he then the bowl,
Laughing, drank he off the whole;
To the Plague (his cousin) quaffed he,
Laying down the bowl, then laughed he.

Mirthful, then, I turned from moody,
But his fearful threats renewed he;
"Fool! is't for a drop of wine,
Think'st thou, I will thee resign?"

"Death," I prayed, "'twixt thee and me,
I would fain a Doctor be;
Leave me, and for this thy patience,
I will give thee half my patients!"

"Oh! if that be so (he cried),
You and I are near allied;
Live, my brother, live until
Thou hast loved and drank thy fill."

"Oh! what sounds of joy and mirth!
Death, thou hast renewed my birth;
Let us one bright goblet sip
To our future fellowship!"

Eternal must my life be now;
By the vintage god, I vow,
Ever must those joys be mine—
Wine and love, and love and wine!

RODOLPH'S RIDE TO THE EMPEROR'S GRAVE.

FROM JUSTINUS KERNER.

In the tower of Germersheim,
Strong in mind but weak in frame,
Sat the aged Emperor Rodolph,
Playing at his favourite game.

And he spoke—"My kind physician,
Fearless like a friend reply,
When, from out this shattered body,
Must my soul ascend on high?"

And the grave physician answered,
"Thou this day thy life mayst lose!"
Kindly smiling spoke the monarch,
"Friend, I thank you for the news!"

"Off to Speier!—off to Speier!"
Spoke he, and the game suspended,
"There, like many a German hero,
Let my weary life be ended!

"Blow the trumpets, bring the steed
That so oft to battle bore me;"
Shuddering stand the servants all,
Still he spoke—"Why weep before me?"

And the war horse quick was brought,
"Friend, our course is far from dreary,
Not to battle but to peace
Bear thy master, the life-weary!"

Weeping stood around the gate
Many a page and many a vassal;
Right and left a chaplain led him,
Half a corse, from out his castle.

And the castle's mourning lindens,
Bent their branches o'er his head;
And the birds sang mournful ditties
As the old man forth was led.

Many flocked along the highway,
As the rumour filled the place,
Then with sorrow shrieked when gazing
On the dying hero's face!

When he spoke, the bliss of Heaven
On his countenance seemed playing;
As if, full of hope and life,
He rode again a-Maying!

From the lofty dome of Speier
Toll'd the great bell deep and hollow;
Knights and burghers, tender maidens,
All in tears the old man follow!

In the proud imperial hall
Briskly did he enter there,
And for all his people prayed he,
Sitting in his golden chair!

"Give me now God's holy body,"
Spoke he with his lips so white,
And his countenance grew youthful
Towards the middle of the night.

And a supernatural lustre
Played within that sacred place,
Where the hero sat expiring,
Heavenly rest upon his face!

Not a bell dare tell the tidings,
Nor the trumpets shrill replying,
Every heart along the Rhine
Felt their aged lord was dying!

To the church in dusky masses
On the weeping people trod,
And they bore the hero's body;
But his spirit was with God!

THE WATER-SPRITE.

FROM JUSTINUS KERNER.

THE May-moon shone with a mild warm glance,
As the maidens of Tubingen met to dance.

They danced and danced each other between,
'Neath a linden tree in the valley green.

A stranger youth, most richly arrayed,
Approached and bowed to the fairest maid.

He reached her his hand with a noble air,
And placed a sea-green wreath on her hair.

"O young man! why is thine arm so cold?"
—"No heat do the waters of Neckar hold!"

"O young man! why is thine hand so pale?
—"In the water the burning sunbeams fail!"

He danced with her far from the linden tree,
—"O young man! my mother is calling me!"

He danced with her still by the Neckar clear,
—"O young man! leave me—I faint with fear!"

He danced with her in where the waters shine,
—"O father! and thou, O mother, mine!"

He bears her to halls of crystal sheen,
—"Farewell! my mates in the valley green!"

THE RICHEST PRINCE.

FROM JUSTINUS KERNER.

PRAISING each his own dominions,
As the fairest of them all,
Sat at Worms four German princes,
Once within the Emperor's hall.

"Glorious"—spoke the Saxon monarch—
"Glorious is that land of mine,
Where the mountains hold the silver
Deep in many a gorgeous mine."

"See my land with plenty teeming,
Spoke the Elector of the Rhine,
"Golden seeds in all the valleys,
On the hills the glorious vine!"

"Mighty cities, wealthy cloisters,"
Thus outspoke Bavaria's king,
"Make my land the richest kingdom,
By the treasures that they bring!"

Then spoke Everard, the Bearded,
Wurtemberg's belovéd lord,
"Small the cities of my kingdom,—
None my mountains silver-stored.

"Yet it holds a treasure hidden,
Brightest, purest, greatest, best,
I my head can safely pillow
On my poorest subject's breast!"

And the Saxon monarch answered,
And his royal brothers there:
"Everard, thy land is richest,—
Thou the noblest crown doth wear."

THE FAITHFUL STEED.

FROM JUSTINUS KERNER.

After the battle Count Turneck rode,
By night, to a church, which is God's abode:

It lay in a forest's leafy gloom—
A monarch slept in that chapel's tomb.

Here the Count would alight and rest—
He knew not an arrow had pierced his breast.

The Count alit, and his horse he freed—
"Graze here till I come, my snow-white steed."

He opened the gate with a hollow sound:
Then a deeper silence reigned around.

The Count groped round by the chilly wall,
Till his fingers fell on a mouldering pall:

"Here can I rest my weary head—
Break not awhile my flinty bed!"

The Count lay down with no thought of fear,
And stretched his limbs on the dead man's bier.

Over the hills the morn shone red:
The Count came not—the Count was dead.

Hundreds of years have winged their flight,
But that steed still waits for the sleeping knight;

And near God's house it still may be seen,
By moonlight grazing on the green!

SAINT LUKE.

FROM AUGUSTUS W. SCHLEGEL.

Saint Luke beheld a phantom grey—
"Arise!—go forth!—make no delay,
To paint the world's divinest face;
Henceforth, assisted by thy hand,
Glad eyes from every Christian land
God's virgin-mother's form shall trace."

He wakens in the white dawn clear,
Still sounds that strange voice in his ear;
He starts from bed, and quickly flies,
Flings round his ample cloak, and bears
The magic pencil's silken hairs,
The palette with its thousand dyes.

He wanders on with silent tread,
Till reaching Mary's humble shed,
He softly striketh at the door;

He greets her with the blesséd name,
She opening greets him with the same,
And many, many kind words more.

"O Virgin, wouldst thou deign impart
Thy favour to my humble art,
That art which God permits me use;
How highly blesséd it would be,
If I thy holy face could see
Reflected in its mimic hues."

Thereat she modestly replies:
"Already hast thou blest mine eyes
With that sweet image of my Son;
He smiles upon me yet, although,
To heaven departing long ago,
His throne and kingdom he hath won.

"But I am but a lowly maid,
Whose earthly dress begins to fade,
Which even in youth I did despise.
That eye that looks through boundless space
Ne'er saw the mirror's flattering face
Reflect my form or downcast eyes."

"The blossoms that to HIM were dear
Fade not with ev'ry flying year;
Most gracious woman earth doth hold,
Alone, of all the human race,
Thou dost not see thy virgin face,
But still let other eyes behold.

"Bethink thee of the trustful eyes,
Long after thou hast reached the skies,
That on thy pictured form shall gaze.
The old and young of every age,
The lisping child, the anxious sage,
Shall seek thy prayers, and speak thy praise!"

"Have I so great a guerdon won?
And yet—alas!—my dearest Son
I could not of his cross relieve;
To HIM who rules the land and sea
I humbly bow the reverent knee,
In fervent prayer, both morn and eve."

"O Virgin, make no more delay,
HE sent to me a phantom grey,
Which bade me paint thy virgin face,
That so, assisted by this hand,
Glad eyes from every Christian land
God's virgin mother's form may trace."

"Well, then, your ordered task pursue,
And, if thou hast the power, renew
The heavenly joy my heart possessed;
Bring back, bring back, that happy time
When my dear Son, in life's young prime,
Reposed upon my grateful breast!"

Saint Luke at once his pencil tries,
Which o'er the vacant tablet flies,
With many a stroke so fine and light;

A brighter light its radiance flings,
For through the chamber angels' wings
Move to and fro in wondering flight.

Him serves that wondering angel band,
Some guide the pencil in his hand,
And some the tender colours blend.
And soon again on Mary's breast
The infant Saviour seems to rest,
To whom all hearts their prayers may send.

The sketch had been completely made,
But for the night's disturbing shade,
He lays the pencil down, and then
He said, "The end requires delay;
When all is dry, some other day,
I hither shall return again."

And now a few swift days have flown,
When Luke once more proceeds alone,
And seeks that humble cottage door.
But in the place of that sweet voice,
That lately made his heart rejoice,
Strange words the passing breezes bore.

The virgin Mother slumbering lay,
Like dewy flowers at close of day;
But now on angel's hands she flies,
And in a blaze of glorious light,
Before the rapt apostle's sight,
Is borne amid the azure skies!

Amazed and glad he looks around,
But, out of reach of sight or sound,
The blesséd mother heaven has gained;
And he,—his reverent awe is such,
Cannot the wondrous picture touch,
And so unfinished it remained.

With pious bliss the heart is blest,
That sweet face falls on every breast,
And leaves a holy joy behind;
And pilgrims come from every land,
Before those downcast eyes to stand,
And strength and grace in gazing find.

And many thousand copies went
Through all the Christian continent,
With slowly lessening truth and grace;
And thus for many centuries,
The reverent eye of love but sees
This shadow of our Lady's face.

At length came down Saint Raphael,
The heavenly face no words can tell
Was mirrored in his eyes alone;
For in the highest heaven serene
Those eyes the holy one had seen
Beside God's everlasting throne.

His pencil, dipped in heavenly hues,
The fading lineaments renews;
The pale lip glows, the dim eye burns:
He finishes what Luke begun,
Then, pleased at what his hand had done,
The angel youth to heaven returns.

SAINT GEORGE'S KNIGHT.

FROM UHLAND.

PART I.

At San Estavan de Germaz loudly do the trumpets peal,
In the camp of Don Fernando, valiant Noble of Castile:
For the Moorish King, Almanzor, cometh with his dusky swarm,
From Cordova thither wending, this devoted town to storm.

All the knights upon their horses sit, full armed in flashing steel:
Seeking through their ranks there rideth Don Fernando of Castile:
"Paskal Vivas! Paskal Vivas! every knight is on his steed—
Flower of our Castilian Knighthood, wilt thou fail us in our need?

"Thou who wert the first on horseback, when the glorious summons rang,
Hear'st thou not my voice appealing, nor the battle-trumpet's clang?
Wilt thou fail the Christian army on this great and final day?
Wilt thou let thy garlands wither, and thy victory-wreaths decay?"

Paskal Vivas cannot hear him—he is in a wood's deep gorge,
Where, upon a green hill shining, stands the Chapel of Saint George:

At the door his steed is standing, spear and shield upon him shine,
And the Knight, in rapt devotion, kneeleth at the holy shrine,

He, so lost in meditation, heareth not the battle's sound,
Which, like moaning winds, doth echo through the woody mountain's round—
Heareth not his war-horse neighing, nor the sound his armour makes,
Loud enough to wake his patron—for Saint George, the true, awakes!

From the clouds he cometh downward, takes the armour of the Knight,
Mounts upon the Knight's proud war-horse, and is borne amid the fight.
Like to him no champion chargeth, flashing hero of the skies!
Now he wins Almanzor's standard, now the Moorish army flies!

Paskal Vivas has concluded piety's absorbing prayer:
Steps outside Saint George's chapel, finds his steed and armour there:
To the camp in thought returneth, looks about in wild amaze,
When the joyous trumpets greet him with the festal notes of praise:

"Paskal Vivas! Paskal Vivas! proud Castilian knighthood's sun,
Be thou praised, most noble victor, for the standards thou hast won!

How thy arms are clotted over—in the conflict torn and rent!
How bedecked with wounds the war-horse, that so bravely with thee went!"
Paskal Vivas vainly striveth all their praises to deny;
To their songs he bendeth lowly—pointing silently on high!

PART II.

'Mid her flowers the Countess Julia wanders in the evening air;
Fatimaun, Almanzor's nephew, takes the lovely captive there—
Flies with his delicious booty through the green woods night and day,
With ten trusty Moorish horsemen, armed to guard him on the way:

When the third morn brightly dawneth, come they to that wood's deep gorge,
Where, upon a green hill shining, stands the chapel of Saint George;
From afar the Countess looketh, sees the Saint's great image stand
At the little open church-door, carved in stone with spear in hand.

Just as when the conquer'd dragon felt his spear's resistless shock,
Whilst the trembling, pale King's daughter tarried chain-bound to the rock;
Weeping, and her white hands ringing, speaks the Countess with affright—
"Oh! Saint George, thou holy champion, help me from this dragon's might."

See!—upon a white steed springing, from the chapel who doth bound,
With the golden tresses waving, and the purple mantle round;
Powerfully his spear he swingeth, strikes the robber Fatimaun,
Who upon the ground is writhing, as the pictured dragon's drawn.

And the ten armed Moorish horsemen, with a wild and frantic wail,
Shields and lances from them flinging, fly away o'er hill and vale;
On her knees the Countess Julia, dazzled—blinded, doth adore:
"Oh! Saint George, thou holy champion, be thou praised for evermore!"
As again her eyes she raises—quickly must the Saint have fled,
For there stood—so rumour telleth—Paskal Vivas in his stead!

THE CHRISTMAS OF THE FOREIGN CHILD.

FROM FRIEDERICH RUECKERT.

Amid a spacious town
The Christmas lights are blazing.
Beneath the cold night's frown
A foreign child is gazing
Sadly up and down.

In every house he sees
Fond fingers intertwining;
Through lamp-illumined trees
The bright warm rooms are shining:
Ah! bitter sights are these!

He weeping speaks: "To-night,
To every child is given
A Christmas tree and light;
But I by earth and heaven
Am now deserted quite.

"A sister's gentle hand
Had given me all I needed,
If I at home did stand;
But here I am unheeded,
In this cold foreign land.

"Will none the orphan see,
And let him in for pity?
O God! and can it be,
That in this crowded city
There is no place for me?

"Will no kind hand relieve
The orphan's deep dejection?
Alas! I must receive
But only the reflection
Of this strange Christmas Eve!"

He taps with fingers thin
On window and on shutter;
They hear not, for the din,
The weak words he doth utter,
Nor let the orphan in.

The father's lessons mild
The listening boy's ear drinketh;
The Christmas gifts are piled
By mother's hands. None thinketh
Of that poor orphan child.

"O Christ! my Saviour dear,
No father and no mother
Have I my heart to cheer;
Be all to me: no other
Consoler have I here."

Cold, cold his small hand grows,
He rubs his frozen fingers;
He shivers in his clothes,
And in the white street lingers,
With eyes that will not close.

There cometh with a light,
Which through the dark street breaketh,
In robes of simple white,
Another child, who speaketh
These sweet words of delight:

"Behold thy Christ in me,
Again a child's form taking—
A little child like thee;
Though all are thee forsaking
By me thou shalt not be.

"My word's impartial boon
I waft o'er hill and valley;
I send my aid as soon
To this poor wretched alley,
As to yon gay saloon.

"My hands, with light divine,
Thy Christmas tree shall kindle.
Thou'lt see, compared with thine,
All other trees shall dwindle,
How beautiful they shine."

To Heaven his little hand
The infant Saviour raiseth—
There doth a great tree stand,
Whose star-lit branch outblazeth
All o'er the azure land.

The child's heart bounds with glee,
At all the starry tapers;
His eyes grow bright to see,
Through Heaven's transparent vapours,
That glorious Christmas tree!

Before his wondering eyes
A glorious vision shifted—
A dream of Paradise!
For Angel hands uplifted
The orphan to the skies.

Within that blessed sphere
A home he now hath gotten—
Even with his Saviour dear:
There soon is all forgotten
That he hath suffered here.

LOVE ETERNAL.

FROM OTTO PRECHTLER.

Love's breath is in the vernal breeze
That fans the cheek on twilight eves;
Love's breath exhales from out the rose,
When morn unfolds its crimson leaves;
Love's breath is in the murmuring sound
That o'er the bubbling fountain rings;
Love's breath is in the little song
The little bird to Nature sings!

Love's breath from yonder starry worlds
Comes down in ether pure and bright;
Love's breath is in the winter's storm,
And in the summer breeze of night.
Warm looks of love from Nature's face
Allure me to her beating heart;
Lost in her fond and pure embrace,
My heart forgets its aching smart.

Love's breath,—it is God's holy breath,
That unto thee, my heart, is given,
Whose gentle impulse, sweet and pure,
Doth softly raise thee up to heaven!
There shall that earthly plant put forth
Eternal flowers, that ne'er shall fall.
Ah! I shall love!—and love!—and love!—
Since love is but the Life of All!

HAPPY LOVE.

FROM WOLFGANG MÜLLER.

O Life's ringing morn! O season divine!
What though thou art vanished, we shall not repine,
We yesterday loved, and to-day 'tis the same,
And to-morrow we'll love with unchangeable flame.

Once, a troop of wild Burschen, so frolic and gay,
We went to the village to welcome the May;
To each door came the maidens, all laughing, to see;
Then, darling, thou laughed, but in secret on me.

At the May-feast, thou gavest—O moment of bliss!—
Thy hand to my pressure, thy lip to my kiss;
Thou wert mine, I was thine, thou delight of my heart,
By a link that eternity never can part!

Not all unenjoyed did the summer-rose fade,
For I brought thee a nosegay, thou beautiful maid;
We shared at the harvest, the dance, and the song,
We shared the ripe clusters, nor thought the day long.

And now that the cold tyrant winter doth reign,
And the storms sweep the mountain and deluge the plain,
With one heart, by our fireside, we sit midst the din:
In the heart is the Summer, when Love blooms within.

O Life's happy morning! O time of delight!—
Thou art with us, since Love doth our bosoms unite,
We loved one another, we still love the same,
And we ever shall love with unchangeable flame!

CHIDHER.

FROM FRIEDERICK RUECKERT.

Thus spoke Chidher, the ever young:
" I pass'd a proud city near,
A man pluck'd fruit the green trees among,
I asked, ' How long is the city here?'
Plucking the fruit he answered me,
' This proud city that here you see,
Has been ever here, and will ever be!'
And when ages had passed away,
Came I the very same way.

" Not a trace of that city could there be found,
But a shepherd played on his reed alone;
His flocks fed free on the mossy ground;
I asked, ' How long is the city gone?'
Playing his reed, he answered me,
" This pasture ground that here you see
Has been ever here, and will ever be!'
And when ages had passed away
Came I the very same way.

"There found I a sea—through the billows' roar
Came a fisherman, rowing near;
As he rested a moment upon his oar,
I asked, 'How long is this wild sea here?'
With a laugh and a shrug he answered me,
'Since the billows have foamed in their angry glee
Have been fishermen here, and will ever be!'
And when ages had passed away,
Came I the very same way.

"There found I a forest with brier-grown tracks,
Where bounded the startled deer;
One fell'd the tall trees with his broad bright axe;
I asked, 'How old is the greenwood here?'
'This wood has been always here,' said he,
'And the trees have been ever a home to me;
And as they have been so they ever will be;'
And when ages had passed away
Came I the very same way.

"There found I a city of pomp and guilt,
Where the people with loud voice speed,
I asked, 'Since when is the city built?
And where is the wood, and sea, and reed?'
With the din they scarcely hearken to me,
'It has ever been such as now you see,
And as it has been so it ever will be!'
And when ages have passed away
Will I pass by the very same way."

THE BOLD MARINER.

FROM PAPE.

THE waves foam round the northern lands,
And o'er the white rocks leap with glee;
Upon the deck the master stands—
"My shipmates, out to sea!

"To beauteous France our bark doth sail,
To wealthy England o'er the brine;
We'll drink the nut-brown English ale,
The sparkling, cool French wine!"

And as the wind blows loud and wild,
And as the sails swell proudly o'er,
Thus speaks to him his only child,
Her farewell from the shore:

"Thou couldst into the green wood go,
Where clear, bright streams refresh the air;
But now the night-winds coldly blow
Thy thin, white, silver hair.

"Thou couldst repose the dark night through,
Within that small, warm room of thine;
But now you watch, and none but you,
Beneath the sad moonshine."

Oh! maiden, peace!—by Helgoland,
By Helgoland, amid the deep,—
Thy father and his sailor band,
Beneath the blue waves sleep!

THE LAUGHING DEATH'S HEAD.

FROM ERNEST WILKOMM.

NEAR Limerick, in a meadow green,
The fiddle goes—the dancer flies—
A little dwarfish man is seen,
And wildest screams of laughter rise:
"Oh! merry Toby, come and stay,
And play for us this festal day."

Poor Toby takes the fiddler's place,
Then brogues are stamped and pipes are lit;
And round and round in rapid race
The merry-footed dancers flit:
"Oh! Toby, show thy face, good man!
Let those resist to laugh who can."

The little fiddler lifts his head,
For laughter then the dance is stayed;
The rich and poor, the wived and wed,
And old and young, and man and maid,
And fair and foul, and best and worst,
All laugh as if their hearts would burst.

Still Toby—little Toby—gazed
Around the group, and to and fro,
Then, loud above the laugh, he raised
His screaming voice, that all might know:
"When soon I fill the narrow den,
God wills my skull will laugh even then!"

Then silent all the dancers grew,
Still Toby played his merry tune;
But none will now the dance renew,
All leave the place deserted soon,
But Toby, who doth still remain,
The lord of the abandoned plain.

Away the timid young men ran,
Or nodded sideways as they past;
Still Toby laughed—poor little man—
As laugh he must, while life doth last.
But soon the laugh—the music's o'er,
And Toby sleeps to wake no more!

Well, twenty years have passed away—
The sexton digs a grave hard by,
His shovel, to the light of day,
Throws up a skull now smooth and dry;
He placed it on the earth and stones
Beside the grave, between two bones.

The bell and psalm resound afar,
The censer fumes, the black plumes wave,
And, borne upon the funeral car,
A corse is carried to the grave.

The bearers stand, and lower the bier,
The Priest with measured step comes near.

He turns him round, then wild and loud,
The group a peal of laughter gave;
The mourners in their darksome shroud,
With laughing, stumble o'er the grave;
With trembling lips they shout and stare—
"See! see! the laughing skull is there!"

There stands the skull, and grins on all,
Still grinning back the laughter loud;
Then laugh the men, the children small,
Then laughs the priest and all the crowd—
All but the sexton, who arose,
And said—"Poor Toby, now repose!"

THE RECONCILIATION.

FROM THEODOR OELKERS.

From the tower of the church's steeple
The warder by night looks down:
"How many life-weary people
Now sleep in this silent town!"

Through the streets the watchman goeth:
"From yon tower one watcheth alway,
Though the storm-wind of winter bloweth,
Or the breath of a night in May!"

They were brothers—but, ah! unprizing
Each other, they lived as foes!
O'er the church roof the full-moon is rising
More mildly than ever it rose.

They were both so weary and wretched,
So lonely and full of woe,
That each to the other stretchéd
His arms from above and below.

The townsfolk, thinking they slumbered,
Thus spoke in the morning light:
"Nor warder nor watchman hath numbered
The hours through the silent night."

At the church door, his face upraising,
Stands the watchman stiff and dead;
And the warder is downward gazing,
So white in the morning-red!

ZOBIR.

FROM AUGUSTUS VON PLATEN.

Plundering, and dreadful, and dark as a storm,
Abdalla conducteth the Saracen swarm
To the African land,
Till soon before Tripoli's turrets they stand.

But ere they beleaguer a bastion or post,
The Stadtholder Gregory comes with his host;
With sword and with lance,
Victorious he comes from the walls of Byzance.

And while the fanatical foe he doth dare,
Beside him there rideth with gold-flowing hair,
Her spear flashing bright,
His beautiful daughter in armour bedight.

The maiden had chosen a manly career,
She shot with the arrow, she brandished the spear;
In the battle's alarms
She was Pallas, but still Cytherea in charms.

Her father rose proudly, and looking around,
His words 'mid the brave-hearted cohorts resound,
"No longer delay,
My men, but away!—'gainst Abdalla away!

"And he who shall bring me the the Infidel's head,
This day my fair daughter Maria shall wed—
A prize for the bold!
And with her an unmeasured treasure of gold!"

Then the might of the Christian was doubled that day,
Then the strength of the Mussulman vanished away;
E'en Abdalla the brave
In his tent shunned the jaws of an imminent grave.

There fought in the army a Mussulman Knight—
Zobir, like the lightning-flash, dashed through the fight;
Forth rode he in wrath,
As the blood from his quick-clinking spurs marked his path.

He reached his commander, and spoke: "Dost thou deem,
Abdalla, the battle is over? Dost dream
In thy tent out of view?
And shall then the world the great Caliph subdue?

"Let us do in return what the Christian has done,
Let us win in the way that the Christian has won
Be artful and bold;
Promise all, e'en the measureless treasure of gold.

"To thy army this word of encouragement say:
'Whoever the hostile commander shall slay,
In return for his head,
This day the most beauteous Maria shall wed.'"

So acted Abdalla with quick-seeing thought,
With valour redoubled his Saracens fought—
Zobir at their head:
'Neath his scimitar Gregory quickly lay dead.

Then fled to the city the Christians in fear,
Then followed the Victors in headlong career;
Then the wall's castles four
The flag of the Prophet triumphantly bore.

Long struggled Maria with grief and disdain,
Till, circled by numbers, at length she was ta'en;
As the crowd round her swept,
She was born to the valiant Zobir, and she wept.

And one of the crowd, gathered round in surprise,
Said, "We bring thee the sweetest, the loveliest prize
Ever seen among men,
For fighting and conquering with us Saracen!"

But answered he quickly, with frowning contempt,
"Who dareth a true manly bosom to tempt?—
Or this snare spreads for me?
I fought for my God and his holy Decree!

"Christian woman! I woo not, or wed not with thee;
But, ere I release thee, what wouldst thou from me?"
Then she said with a tear—
"To weep for my father, and hate thee, Zobir!"

Notes.

NOTES.

[1] Page 5.—*'Neath those hills.*

THE hills of Else. See Appendix to O'Daly's "*History of the Geraldines*," translated by the Rev. C. P. Meehan, p. 130.

[2] Page 5.—*Lived Paolo, the young Campanaro.*

Campanaro, Bell-founder.

[3] Page 19.—*The bright Tir-na-n-oge.*

The country of youth ; the Elysium of the Pagan Irish.

[4] Page 20.—*Like to thy lakes and thy rivers, thy sorrows must ever increase.*

Camden seems to credit a tradition commonly believed in his time, of a gradual increase in the number and size of the lakes and rivers of Ireland.—*Rees' Cyclopædia.*

[5] Page 26.—*Oonagh, with all her bright nymphs, had come down from the far fairy hill.*

The beautiful hill in Lower Ormond called *Knockshegowna, i. e.*, Oonagh's Hill, so called from being the fabled residence of Oonagh (or Una), the Fairy Queen of Spenser. One of the finest views of the Shannon is to be seen from this hill.

[6] Page 31.—*A Tale of Ceim-an-eich.*

The pass of Kéim-an-eigh (the path of the deer) lies to the south-west of Inchageela, in the direction of Bantry Bay. The tourist will commit a grievous

error if he omit to visit it. Perhaps in no part of the kingdom is there to be found a place so utterly desolate and gloomy. A mountain has been divided by some convulsion of nature; and the narrow pass, about two miles in length, is overhung on either side by perpendicular masses, clothed in wild ivy and underwood, with, occasionally, a stunted yew tree or arbutus growing among them. At every step advance seems impossible; some huge rock jutting out into the path; and, on sweeping round it, seeming to conduct only to some barrier still more insurmountable; while from all sides rush down the "wild fountains," and, forming for themselves a rugged channel, make their way onward; the first tributary offering to the gentle and fruitful Lee:

> "Here, amidst heaps
> Of mountain wrecks, on either side thrown high,
> The wide-spread traces of its watery might,
> The tortuous channel wound."

Nowhere has nature assumed a more appalling aspect, or manifested a more stern resolve to dwell in her own loneliness and grandeur, undisturbed by any living thing; for even the birds seem to shun a solitude so awful, and the hum of bee or chirp of grasshopper is never heard within its precincts.—*Hall's Ireland*, vol. i. p. 117.

[7] Page 31.—*Glengariff's coral strand.*

In the bay of Glengariff, and towards the north-west parts of Bantry Bay, they dredge up large quantities of coral sand.—*Smith's Cork*, vol. i. p. 286.

[8] Page 34.—*Her lips like lusmore blossoms which the fairies intertwine.*

The lusmore (or fairy cap)—literally, the great herb, *Digitalis purpurea.*

[9] Page 37.—*The fearful Phooka Horse.*

In the fairy mythology of Ireland there is scarcely any being more capable of poetic illustration than the Phooka, and yet, with the exception of this ballad, and one other ("The Fairy Rath of Loch Innin," *Book of Irish Ballads*, p. 42), there is no modern Irish poem, as far as I have been able to discover, which contains a serious description of it. The Phooka is described as belonging to the malignant class of fairy beings, and he is as wild and capricious in his character as he is changeable in his form. At one time an

eagle or an *ignis fatuus*, at another a horse or a bull, while occasionally he figures as two single animals "rolled into one," exhibiting a compound of the calf and goat. When he assumes the form of a horse, his great object, according to a recent writer, seems to be "to obtain a rider, and then he is in his most malignant glory. Headlong he dashes through brier and brake, through flood and fell, over mountain, valley, moor, or river, indiscriminately; up or down precipice is alike to him, provided he gratifies the malevolence that seems to inspire him. He bounds and flies over and beyond them, gratified by the distress, and utterly reckless and ruthless of the cries and danger and suffering of the luckless wight who bestrides him. As the 'tinna geolane,' or 'Will-o'-the-wisp,' he lures but to betray. Like the Hanoverian 'Tuckbold,' he deludes the night wanderer into a bog, and leads him to his destruction in a quagmire or pit. Macpherson's Spirit of Loda is evidently founded on the tradition of the Phooka; and in the Finnian Tales he is repeatedly mentioned as the 'Puka (gruagach, or hairy spirit) of the blue valley.'"—*Croker's Fairy Legends, Hall's Ireland.*

[10] Page 38.—*The eagle homes of Malloc.*

"Wildly from Malloc the eagles are screaming."—*Callanan's Gougane Barra.*

[11] Page 38.—*When he bounds, as bounds the Mialloch.*

Mialloch, "the murmuring river" at Glengariff.—*Smith's Cork.*

[12] Page 38.—*As shines green Glashenglora.*

Glashenglora, a mountain torrent, which finds its way into the Atlantic Ocean through Glengariff, in the west of the county of Cork. The name, literally translated, signifies "the noisy green water."—*Barry's Songs of Ireland*, p. 173.

[13] Page 38.—*The sides of Slieve-na-goil.*

The most remarkable and beautiful mountain at Glengariff is the noble conical one whose ancient name was *Sliabh-na-goil* ("the mountain of the wild people").

[14] Page 39.—*Beneath a rock which keepeth the entrance to the glen.*

There is a great square rock, literally resembling the description in the text, which stands near the Glengariff entrance to the pass of Céim-an-eich.

[15] Page 47.—*The foray of Con O'Donnell.*

"Con, the son of Hugh Roe O'Donnell, with his small-powerful force,—and the reason Con's force was called the small-powerful force was, because he was always in the habit of mustering a force which did not exceed twelve score of well-equipped and experienced battle-axe-men, and sixty chosen active horse-men, fit for battle,—marched, with the forementioned force, to the residence of Mac John of the Glynnes (in the county of Antrim); for Con had been informed that Mac John had in his possession the finest woman, steed, and hound, of any other person in his neighbourhood. He sent a messenger for the steed before that time, and was refused, although Con had, at the same time, promised it to one of his own people. Con did not delay, and got over every difficult pass with his small-powerful force, without battle or obstruction, until he arrived in the night at the house of Mac John, whom he, in the first place, took prisoner, and his wife, steed, and hound, and all his property, were under Con's control, for he found the same steed, with sixteen others, in the town on that occasion. All the Glynnes were plundered on the following day by Con's people, but he afterwards, however, made perfect restitution of all property, to whomsoever it belonged, to Mac John's wife, and he set her husband free to her after he had passed the Bann westward. He brought with him the steed and great booty and spoils, into Tirhugh, and ordered the cattle-prey to be let out on the pasturage."—*Annals of the Four Masters*, translated by Owen Connellan, Esq., p. 331–2.

The poem which I have founded upon the foregoing passage (and in which I have made the hero act with more generosity than the Annals warrant) was written and published in the Dublin University Magazine before the appearance of Mr. O'Donovan's "Annals of the Kingdom of Ireland,"—the magnificent work published in 1848 by Messrs. Hodges and Smith, of this city. For Mr. O'Donovan's version of this passage, which differs from that of the former translator in two or three important particulars, see the second volume of his work, p. 1219.

[16] Page 47.—*Along the hills of Donegal.*

The principal castle of the O'Donnells was at Donegal. The building, of which some portions still exist, was erected in the twelfth century. The banqueting-hall, which is the scene of the opening portion of this ballad, is still preserved, and commands some very beautiful views.

[17] Page 47.—*Along the shores of Inver Bay.*

A beautiful inlet, about six miles west of Donegal.

[18] Page 47.—*As smooth and white Loch Eask expands.*

Loch Eask is about two miles from Donegal. Inglis describes it as being as pretty a lake, on a small scale, as can well be imagined.

[19] Page 47.—*As Rosapenna's silvery sands.*

The sands of Rosapenna are described as being composed of "hills and dales, and undulating swells, smooth, solitary, and desolate, reflecting the sun from their polished surface," &c.

[20] Page 47.—*Clan Dalaigh of the golden shields.*

"Clan Dalaigh" is a name frequently given by Irish writers to the Clan O'Donnell.

[21] Page 47.—*The Fairy Gun.*

"The Fairy Gun" is an orifice in a cliff near Bundoran (four miles S. W. of Ballyshannon), into which the sea rushes with a noise like that of artillery, and from which mist, and a chanting sound, issue in stormy weather.

[22] Page 47.—*With smoother roll the torrents flow*
Adown the rocks of Assaroe.

The waterfall at Ballyshannon.

[23] Page 48.—*The heir of Conal Golban's line.*

The O'Donnells are descended from Conal Golban, son of Niall of the Nine Hostages.

[24] Page 49.—*Cushendall.*

Cushendall is very prettily situated on the eastern coast of the county Antrim. This, with all the territory known as the *Glynnes* (so called from the intersection of its surface by many rocky dells), from Glenarm to Ballycastle, was at this time in the possession of the Mac Donnells, a clan of Scotch descent. The principal castle of the Mac Donnells was at Glenarm.

[25] Page 50.—*Royal rock of Doune.*

The Rock of Doune, in Kilmacrenan, where the O'Donnells were inaugurated.

[26] Page 52.—*Insi Gall.*

Insi Gall—the Hebrides.

[27] Page 54.—*Carrig-Rede.*

Carrick-a-rede (Carraig-a-Ramhad)—the Rock in the Road—lies off the coast, between Ballycastle and Portrush ; a chasm sixty feet in breadth, and very deep, separates it from the coast.

[28] Page 54.—*The cataract of Hugh.*

The waterfall of Assaroe, at Ballyshannon.

[29] Page 57.—*Sainted kinsman.*

St. Columba, who was an O'Donnell.

[30] Page 59.—*Wild whirring gannets pierce the sails*
Of barks that sweep by Arran's shore.

" This bird (the Gannet) flys through the ship's sails, piercing them with his beak."—O'Flaherty's *H-Iar Connaught*, p. 12, published by the Irish Archæological Society.

[31] Page 60.—*Evir.*

She was the wife of Oisin the bard, who is said to have lived and sung for some time at Cushendall, and to have been buried at Donegal.

[32] Page 63.—*When Clough-i-Stookan's mystic rock*
The wail of drowning men doth mock !

The Rock of Clough-i-Stookan lies on the shore between Glenarm and Cushendall; it has some resemblance to a gigantic human figure—" The winds whistle through its crevices like the wailing of mariners in distress."—*Hall's Ireland*, vol. iii. p. 133.

[33] Page 64.—*The Grey Man's Path.*

"The Grey Man's Path" (*Casan an fir Leith*) is a deep and remarkable chasm, dividing the promontory of Fairhead (or Benmore) in two.

[34] Page 73.—*The voyage of St. Brendan.*

"We are informed that Brendan, hearing of the previous voyage of his cousin, Barinthus, in the western ocean, and obtaining an account from him of the happy isles he had landed on in the far west, determined, under the strong desire of winning heathen souls to Christ, to undertake a voyage of discovery himself. And aware that all along the western coast of Ireland there were many traditions respecting the existence of a western land, he proceeded to the islands of Arran, and there remained for some time, holding communication with the venerable St. Enda, and obtaining from him much information on what his mind was bent. There can be little doubt that he proceeded northward along the coast of Mayo, and made inquiry, among its bays and islands, of the remnants of the Tuatha Danaan people, that once were so expert in naval affairs, and who acquired from the Milesians, or Scots, that overcame them, the character of being magicians, for their superior knowledge. At Inniskea, then, and Innisgloria, Brendan set up his cross; and, in after times, in his honour were erected those curious remains that still exist. Having prosecuted his inquiries with all diligence, Brendan returned to his native Kerry; and from a bay sheltered by the lofty mountain that is now known by his name, he set sail for the Atlantic land; and, directing his course towards the south-west, in order to meet the summer solstice, or what we would call the tropic, after a long and rough voyage, his little bark being well provisioned, he came to summer seas, where he was carried along, without the aid of sail or oar, for many a long day. This, it is to be presumed, was the great gulf-stream, and which brought his vessel to shore somewhere about the Virginian capes, or where the American coast tends eastward, and forms the New England States. Here landing, he and his companions marched steadily into the interior for fifteen days, and then came to a large river, flowing from east to west: this, evidently, was the river Ohio. And this the holy adventurer was about to cross, when he was accosted by a person of noble presence,—but whether a real or visionary man does not appear,—who told him he had gone far enough; that further discoveries were reserved for other men, who would, in due time, come and christianize all that

pleasant land. The above, when tested by common sense, clearly shows that Brendan landed on a continent, and went a good way into the interior, met a great river running in a different direction from those he heretofore crossed; and here, from the difficulty of transit, or want of provisions, or deterred by increasing difficulties, he turned back; and, no doubt, in a dream, he saw some such vision which embodied his own previous thought, and satisfied him that it was expedient for him to return home. It is said he remained seven years away, and returned to set up a college of three thousand monks, at Clonfert, and he then died in the odour of sanctity."—*Cæsar Otway's Sketches in Erris and Tyrawley*, note, pp. 98, 99.

According to Colgan, St. Brendan set out on his voyage in 545. Dr. Lanigan, however (*Ecclesiastical Hist.*, vol. ii. p. 35), considers that it must have commenced some years earlier, as it is natural to suppose that Brendan was, at the time of undertaking such a perilous work, in the vigour of his age, and not yet sixty years old, as he was in the year 545.

Notwithstanding the interesting nature of the Legend of St. Brendan, a copy of it is not very easily to be met with. It is not given in Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, as St. Brendan's festival falls on the 16th May, and Colgan's published work extends only to the end of March. There is in the MS. in Marsh's Library, Dublin, known as the *Codex Kilkeniensis*, a Life of St. Brendan, which, however, is unfortunately imperfect. The lacunæ may be filled up, but not in a very satisfactory manner, from Capgrave's *Nova Legenda*, published in 1516, and which can be seen in the same library. An English version of the legend is given in Caxton's translation of the *Aurea Legenda* of Jacobus de Voragine, although it is not to be met with in the original work. Two French versions, as well as the original Latin, have been published in Paris, under the following title, "*La Legende Latine de S. Brandaines avec une traduction en prose et en poesie Romanes.* Publiée par Achille Jubinal," 1836.

[35] Page 73.—*O Ita!*

St. Ita was of the princely family of the Desii or Nandesi, in the now county of Waterford. By the divine command she established the convent of *Cluain-Credhuil*, in that portion of Hy-Conaill which constitutes the present barony of Connello, in the county of Limerick. When Brendan was a mere infant, he was placed under her care, and remained with her five years, after which period he was led away by Bishop Ercus, in order to receive from him the more

solid instruction necessary for his advancing years. Brendan retained always the greatest respect and affection for his foster-mother; and he is represented, after his seven years' voyage, amusing St. Ita with an account of his adventures in the ocean. He, however, was not the only person reared by the benevolent abbess of *Cluain-Credhuil;* her own nephew, Pulcherius, had also this enviable advantage. The manner of his birth, as described in Colgan, is so curious, that it is worth transcribing. His father's name was Beoanus; he was a skilful artificer, and of an honourable family in Connaught; but being compelled to fly into exile, he came into the neighbourhood of St. Ita. She, hearing of his professional skill, and being anxious to make some addition to the buildings of her convent, requested him to undertake the work. He consented, on the conditions of receiving Nessa, the sister of the saint, as his wife, and also some land on which to settle. St. Ita acquiesced in the proposition, and gave him her sister Nessa to wife; and he, with great assiduity, applied himself to erect the buildings in the monastery of the saint. It happened, after a time, that in battle, whither he had followed a certain chieftain, Beoanus was killed; and his head, being cut off, was carried away a great distance. St. Ita was, of course, very much grieved at this occurrence, particularly as she had promised her brother in-law that he would have a son, which promise was unfulfilled, as his wife had been sterile up to this time. St. Ita went to the field of battle, and found the mutilated body of Beoanus, but, of course, without the head. She, however, prayed that it might be shown to her, and the head, through the divine power, flew through the air, and stopped where the body lay before her; and the Lord, at the entreaty of his handmaid, made the head adhere to the body as perfectly as if had never been cut off, except that a slight mark of the wound remained; and the space of one hour having passed, he rose alive, saluting the servant of the Lord, and returning thanks to God. After the return of Beoanus, his wife conceived, and she brought forth a son, as St. Ita had promised. This son was Pulcherius, and he remained with the saint until he reached his twentieth year.—*Colgan's Acta Sanctorum*, p. 68.

[36] Page 77.—*Hy-Brasail.*

Hy-Brasail, or the Enchanted Island, which was supposed to be visible from the western coast of Ireland every seven years. The ballad of Gerald Griffin, and the frequent allusion to this subject in works recently published, render it unnecessary to give any more particular description of it in this place. Among

the several modes of disenchanting this island, and others subject to similar eccentric disappearances, resorted to by our ancestors, that of fire seems to have been the one most frequently attempted, and the only one which was attended with any success; as not only was the island of Innisbofin, off the coast of Connemara, fixed in its present position by means of a few sparks of lighted turf falling upon it, but the still more celebrated *Hy-Brasail* itself seems to have met with the same disaster, if we are to credit a very matter-of-fact, and circumstantial account, which may be seen in Hardiman's Irish Minstrelsy, vol. i. p. 369. Shooting a fiery arrow was one of the means resorted to for bringing the disenchanting element into connexion with Hy-Brasail; it was certainly the most elegant method, if not the most successful.

[37] Page 78.—*Ara of the Saints.*

From the number of holy men and women formerly inhabiting Arran, it received the name of *Ara-na-naomh*, or "Ara of the Saints."—Colgan, *Acta Sanctorum*, p. 710, n. 18.

[38] Page 78.—*Blessed Enda.*

St. Enda, or Endeus, was the first abbot of Arran; it was in the year 540, according to Colgan, that Brendan paid him the visit described in the text.—*Ibid.* p. 714.

[39] Page 78.—*The Old Sea.*

The Atlantic was anciently called *Shan-Arragh*, or the Old Sea.—"Sketches in Erris and Tyrawly," p. 51

[40] Page 78.—*The Hill of Miracles.*

It is not mentioned from what place Brendan proceeded on this visit to Arran. It is extremely probable that it was from Ardfert, five miles north-west of Tralee, where he had before this period established a monastery, and where a portion of his church (one of the most beautiful ruins in Kerry), still remains to this day. According to Sir James Ware (vol. i. p. 518), Ardfert signifies "a wonderful place on an eminence," or, as some interpret it, "the Hill of Miracles."

[41] Page 78.—*The shallow sandy Leigh.*

Tralee was anciently written *Traleigh*, i. e. "the strand of the river Leigh," which is a small stream that empties itself at the bottom of Tralee Bay.

[42] Page 78.—*The Samphire Isles.*

Islands in the Bay of Tralee.

[43] Page 78.—*Fenor Sound.*

Between Fenit Island and the mainland.

[44] Page 78.—*The pleasant strand.*

The strand of Ballyheigh is, in fine weather, a very pleasant ride.—Smith's Kerry, 208.

[45] Page 78. ——————*The tall cliff*
Whereon the pale rose amethysts are found.

The Amethyst Cliffs, near Kerry Head. Very fine amethysts have been found among those cliffs. Smith describes their colours as being of various degrees and shades of purple; some approach to a violet, and others to a pale rose colour.—p. 405.

[46] Page 78.—*Moyferta's rocky point.*

Kerry Head, or Cape Lane, terminates the southern extremity of the barony of Moyferta, now called Moyarta, in the county of Clare.

[47] Page 78.—*Whose troubled waves break o'er the city lost,*
Chafed by the marble turrets that they hide.

It is said that the mouth of the Shannon is the site of a lost city, and that its towers, and spires, and turrets, acting as breakers against the tide-water, occasion the roughness of this part of the estuary.—*Hall's Ireland*, iii. 436. For a story founded on this legend, see Part IV. of the "Voyage of St. Brendan," p. 88.

[48] Page 79.—*Ibrickan's hills, moory and tame.*

The barony of Ibrickan, in the county of Clare.

[49] Page 79.—*Inniscaorach's caves, so wild and dark.*

Enniskerry Island, half a mile from the shore. There are some curious natural caves here.

[50] Page 79.—*The white-faced otter came.*

The white-faced otter, called by the Irish *Dobhar-chu*, is occasionally seen off the western coast of Connaught. Martin, in his description of the Western Isles, says, that "seamen ascribe great virtue to its skin; for they say that it is fortunate in battle, and that victory is always on its side."—p. 159.

[51] Page 79.—*The soaring gannet.*

"Here the gannet soars high into the sky, to espy his prey in the sea under him," &c.,—O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, p. 12.

[52] Page 79.—*The proud bird that flies but o'er the sea.*

"Birds found in the high cliffs and rocks of Arran, which never flie but over the sea."—*Ibid.*, p. 13.

[53] Page 79. ——————*The girrinna passed*
Upon the branch of some life-giving tree.

"Here is the bird engendered by the sea, out of timber long lying in the sea. Some call them clakes and soland geese, some puffins, and others bernacles, because they resemble them. We call them *girrinn.*"—*O'Flaherty's West Connaught*, p. 13. The Irish name is *cadan girinna.*

[54] Page 79.—*The name of blessed Coemhan, who doth show*
Pity unto the storm-tossed seaman's prayers.

Saint Coemhan (Kevin) was brother to the celebrated Saint Kevin, of Glendalough. The third island of Arran, Innisoirthir, or the Eastern Isle, was also called Ara-Coemhan, in his honour. Hardiman says that he is the most famous of the saints of Arran, and that he is believed to have often abated storms, after having been piously invoked.—*Notes to O'Flaherty's West Connaught*, p. 87.

[55] Page 79.—*Bealach-na-fearbac's treacherous sound.*

Between the middle and the eastern isle is *Bealach-na-fearbac*, or the "Foul Sound."—*Notes to O'Flaherty's West Connaught* p. 92.

[56] Page 79.—*St. Kennerg's well.*

This is a beautiful spring in the middle isle, dedicated to Saint Kennerg, who, according to tradition, was daughter to a king of Leinster. "Her "well," says O'Flaherty, "is there in a rock, and never becomes drie."—p. 86. The citadel alluded to is *Dun-Conchobhair*. It rivals *Dun-Ængus*, situated in the great island, both in masonry and extent.—*Ibid.* p. 77.

[57] Page 79.—*Binn-Aite's rocky height.*

Bealach-na-haite (now called Gregory's Sound) takes its name from *Binn-Aite*, an elevated part of the great island.—*Ibid. Note*, p. 92.

[58] Page 80.—*That marble-covered land.*

The surface of Arran is covered over with large flat slabs of stone. Hardiman says that the "marble islands" would not be a bad name for the Arran isles generally.

[59] Page 80.—*How his own sister, standing by the side*
Of the great sea, which bore no human bark,
Spread her light cloak upon the conscious tide,
And sailed thereon securely as an ark.

This sister was St. Fanchea, who, going with three female companions to visit her brother Enda, who was then in Rome, came to the seaside; and, not finding a vessel to carry them over, spread her cloak upon the sea, and passed over upon it to the desired port of Britain. During the voyage, the hem of the cloak sank a little beneath the waves, in consequence of one of her companions having brought a brazen vessel with her from the convent, contrary to the expressed command of the saint. Upon her throwing it from her into the sea, the sinking hem rose up on a level with the rest of the cloak.—Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, p. 2.

[60] Page 80.—*And how Scothinus walked upon the waves,*
Which seemed to him the meadow's verdant sod.

St. Scothinus, by fasting and other penitential observances, had so purified his body, that he had the privilege of walking upon the sea with dry feet, and going upon it whither he pleased, without using any ship or vessel whatsoever. In his Life it is mentioned that, upon one occasion, while he was thus walking over to Britain, a ship approached him, in which was the Bishop St. Barra, who, beholding the man of God Scothinus, and recognising him, inquired wherefore he walked upon the sea? Scothinus replied, that it was a flowery field on which he walked, and immediately extending his hand to the water, he plucked from the middle of the ocean a handful of rosy flowers, which, as a proof of his assertion, he flung into the bosom of the blessed bishop. The bishop, on the other hand, to prove that he was justified in making such an inquiry, drew a fish from the sea and threw it to St. Scothinus, and each, magnifying God for his miracles, went on his separate way.—Colgan's *Acta Sanctorum*, p. 10, chaps. v. vi.

[61] Page 80.—*To teach the infidels from Corcomroe.*

"This island (Ara-mhor) was inhabited by infidels out of Corcomroe, the next adjacent country in the county of Clare, when St. Enna (Enda) got it by the donation of Engus, King of Munster, anno Christi circiter 480."—O'Flaherty's *West Connaught*, p. 79. These "infidels" were headed by a chief Corbanus, about whom the following curious story is told by Colgan. Being in possession of Arran previous to the arrival of St. Endan, he surrendered it to him with very bad grace, and was not perfectly convinced of his right to the island, until after the occurrence of the following miracle. For, wishing to test how far St. Enda was protected by the celestial powers, he prepared a large barrel, which he filled with corn-seed, and leaving it on the shore of the mainland, he said to himself, "If Enda be a favourite of heaven, this corn, which he so much requires, will be carried over to him in a miraculous manner." Wonderful to relate, the event occurred precisely as he anticipated, for the angels of God, taking the barrel, drew it through the sea, and the track of the barrel still remains in perpetual serenity amid the turbulance of the surrounding water.—*Ibid.* p. 707, chap. 16.

[62] Page 80.— *Upon the floating breast of the hard rock,*
Which lay upon the glistening sands below.

When St. Enda obtained the grant of Arran from his brother-in-law, Engus Mac Natfraich, for the purpose of erecting a monastery thereon, he proceeded, with his disciples, to the sea-shore, in order to pass over to Arran. There being no vessel at that place, and the saint not wishing to lose time, he ordered eight of his monks to raise a great stone, which lay upon the shore, and to place it in the water, and a favourable breeze springing up, they were wafted over the sea, on this stone, in perfect safety, to Arran.—*Acta Sanctorum*, p. 707, chap. 14.

[63] Page 81.— *When blessed Kieran went to Clon-mac-nois,*
To found the sacred churches by the stream—
How he did weep to see the Angels flee
Away from Arran as a place accursed;
And men tear up the island-shading tree,
Out of the soil from which it sprung at first.

When St. Kieran, with many pious followers, was about leaving Arran, to found the monastery of Clonmacnoise, upon the Shannon, St. Enda had many visions, in one of which he saw all the angels, who had hitherto been the guardians of that island, departing from it in a great crowd. In another, he saw a mighty tree growing in the midst of Arran, with its branches extending all round to the sea, and many men came, and dug up the tree by the roots, and it was borne with them through the air, and replanted by the banks of the river Shannon, where it grew to a still larger size.—*Ibid*, p. 710, chap. 28. According to Usher, St. Kieran left Arran in the year 538.

[64] Page 81.—*The burning lake of Lassaræ.*

"There is some uncommonly fine pasture-land about Moylough, and near it is a lake, called Lough Lassaræ, or the illuminated lake. This was celebrated as a place of religious rite, even in the time of paganism; and its waters are said, every seventy years, to possess this luminous quality in excess; and then the people bring their children and cattle to be washed in its phosphoric waters, and they are considered to have no chance of dying that year."— *Cæsar Otway's Tour in Connaught*, p. 163. Lough Lurgan was the ancient name of Galway Bay.

[65] Page 81.—*And, as I passed Mac Dara's sacred Isle,*
Thrice bowed my mast, and thrice let down my sail.

This is the island formerly called *Cruach Mhir Dara*, literally, the stack, or rick (from its appearance in the ocean) of Mac Dara, who is the patron saint of Moyrus parish. "The boats that pass between Mason-head and this island," says O'Flaherty, "have a custome to bow down their sails three times, in reverence to the saint."—*Description of H-Iar Connaught*, p. 99.

[66] Page 81.—*Westward of Arran, as I sailed away,*
I saw the fairest sight eye can behold,—
Rocks which, illumined by the morning's ray,
Seemed like a glorious city built of gold.
Men moved along each sunny shining street,
Fires seemed to blaze, and curling smoke to rise,
When lo! the city vanished, and a fleet,
With snowy sails, rose on my ravished eyes.

These are the Skird Rocks, which are thus beautifully described by O'Flaherty: "There is, westward of Arran, in sight of the next continent of Balynahynsy barony, Skerde, a wild island of huge rocks, the receptacle of a deal of seals thereon yearly slaughtered. These rocks sometimes appear to be a great city far off, full of houses, castles, towers, and chimneys: sometimes full of blazing flames, smoak, and people running to and fro. Another day you would see nothing but a number of ships, with their sails and riggings: then so many great stakes, or reeks of corn and turf; and this not only on a fair sun-shining days, whereby it might be thought the reflections of the sun-beams or the vapours arising about it, had been the cause, but also on dark and cloudy days happening. There is another like number of rocks called Carrigmeacan, on the same coast, whereon the like apparitions are seen. But the enchanted island of O'Brazil is not always visible, as those rocks are, nor these rocks have always those apparitions."—*H-Iar Connaught*, p. 69.

[67] Page 82.—*The wicker boat, with ox-skins covered o'er.*

The vessel in which Brendan took his wonderful voyage was made of wattles, over which were ox-skins, stretched, and made waterproof with pitch and allow. Boats of a similar construction are used to this day among the islands of West Connaught.

[68] Page 83.—*The hill that bears my humble name.*

Brandon Hill.

[69] Page 83.—*And the proud top of the majestic hill*
Shone in the azure air—serene and bright.

Smith, in his "History of Kerry" says: "It is a certain token of fine weather when its tops is visible."—p. 194.

[70] Page 86.—*When the dark term of mortal lives arrives.*

The three preceding stanzas are a paraphrase of the beautiful hymn of the Catholic Church, "*Ave, Maris stella.*"

[71] Page 88.—*The buried city.*

"The mouth of the Shannon is grand, almost beyond conception. Its inhabitants point to a part of the river, within the headlands, over which the tides rush with extraordinary rapidity and violence. They say it is the site of a lost city, long buried beneath the waves; and that its towers, and spires, and turrets, acting as breakers against the tide water occasion the roughness of this part of the estuary. The whole city becomes visible on every seventh year, and has been often seen by the fishermen sailing over it; but the sight bodes ill-luck, for within a month after the ill-fated sailor is a corpse. The time of its appearance is also rendered further disastrous by the loss of some boat or vessel, of which, or its crew, no vestige is ever to be found."—*Hall's Ireland*, iii. 436.

[72] Page 88.—*The isle where good Senanus dwells.*

Inniscattery Island.

[73] Page 92.—*Arran's blessed shore.*

See note [60], p. 368.

[74] Page 92.—*Like good Scothinus, had he reached his hand.*

See note [60], p. 368.

[75] Page 99.—*The angels bore thee in thy childhood's days.*

Upon a certain occasion, when St. Ita was sleeping, she saw an angel ap-

proach her, and present her with three precious stones, at which she wondered exceedingly, until informed by the angel that the three precious stones were types of the blessed Trinity, by whom she would be always visited and protected.—*Life of St. Ita*, in Colgan, p. 66.

[76] Page 99.—*There dwells the bird that to the farther west*
Bears the sweet message of the coming spring.

The Blue Bird (*Le rouge gorge bleu de Buffon.*) "The pleasing manners and sociable disposition of this little bird entitle him to particular notice. As one of the first messengers of the spring, bringing the charming tidings to our very doors, he bears his own recommendation always along with him, and meets with a hearty welcome from everybody."—(*Wilson and Bonaparte's American Ornithology*, vol. i. pp. 56, 57.) His favourite haunts are the cedar trees of the Bermudas.

[77] Page 99.—*While winter prowls around the neighbouring seas,*
The happy bird dwells in his cedar nest,
Then flies away, and leaves his favourite trees
Unto his brother of the graceful crest.

The Cedar Bird. This bird wears a crest on the head, which, when erected, gives it a gay and elegant appearance.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 109.

[78] Page 99.—*The sweet-voiced thrush beareth a golden crown.*

The Golden-crowned Thrush. *Sciurus Aurocapillus.*—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 238.

[79] Page 99.—*The sparrow boasts a scarlet dress.*

The Scarlet Tanagar. "Seen among the green leaves, with the light falling strongly on his plumage, he really appears beautiful."—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 194. "Mr. Edwards calls it *the Scarlet Sparrow.*"—*Ibid*, p. 196.

[80] Page 99.—*The golden robin flies on fiery plumes.*

The Baltimore Oriole. It has a variety of names, among which are "the golden robin," and "the fire bird;" the latter, from the bright orange of its plumes, shining through the green leaves, like a flash of fire.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 16.

[81] Page 99.—*The small wren a purple ruby wears.*

The Ruby-crowned Wren.—"This little bird visits us early in the spring, from the south, and is generally found among the maple blossoms about the beginning of April.—*Wilson and Bonaparte*, vol. i. p. 831.

[82] Page 100.—*Birds, too, that, even in our sunniest hours,*
Ne'er to this cloudy land one moment stray,
Whose brilliant plumes, fleeting and fair as flowers,
Come with the flowers, and with the flowers decay.

Peacocks. "Their brilliant plumes, which surpass in beauty the fairest flowers, wither like them, and fall with each succeeding year."—*Buffon.*

[83] Page 100.—*The Indian bird, with hundred eyes, that throws*
From his blue neck the azure of the skies,
And his pale brother of the northern snows,
Bearing white plumes, mirrored with brilliant eyes.

"The white Peacock of Sweden. Although the plumage of the white peacock is altogether of this colour, the long plumes of the train do yet retain, at their extremities, some vestiges of the brilliant mirrors peculiar to the species."—*Cuvier.* These are the only birds not strictly American that I have introduced into this description.

[84] Page 100.—*Oft, in the sunny mornings, have I seen*
Bright-yellow birds, of a rich lemon hue,
Meeting in crowds upon the branches green,
And sweetly singing all the morning through.

The Yellow Bird, or Goldfinch; its colour is of a rich lemon shade. "On their first arrival in Pennsylvania, in February, and until early in April, they frequently assemble in great numbers on the same tree, and bask and dress themselves in the morning sun, singing in concert for half an hour together; the confused mingling of their notes forming a kind of harmony not at all unpleasant."—*Wilson and Bonaparte*, vol. i. p. 12.

[85] Page 100.—*And others, with their heads greyish and dark,*
Pressing their cinnamon cheeks to the old trees,
And striking on the hard, rough, shrivelled bark,
Like conscience on a bosom ill at ease.

The Gold-winged Wood-pecker.—His back and wings are of a dark amber colour; upper part of the head an iron grey; cheeks, and part surrounding the eyes, of a fine cinamon colour. The sagacity of this bird in discovering, under a sound bark, a hollow limb or trunk of a tree, is truly surprising.—*Wilson and Bonaparte*, vol. i. p. 45.

[86] Page 100.—*And diamond birds chirping their single notes,*
Now 'mid the trumpet-flower's deep blossoms seen,
Now floating brightly on with fiery throats,
Small-winged emeralds of golden green.

Humming Birds. "The Jewels of Ornithology"—"Least of the winged vagrants of the sky." Wilson describes this interesting bird in the following manner:—"The Humming Bird is extremely fond of tubular flowers, and I have often stopped with pleasure to observe his manœuvres among the blossoms of the trumpet-flower. When arrived before a thicket of those that are full blown, he poises, or suspends himself on wing for the space of two or three seconds, so steadily, that his wings become invisible, or only like a mist, and you can plainly distinguish the pupil of his eye looking round with great quickness and circumspection. The glossy golden green of his back, and the fur of his throat dazzling in the sun, form altogether a most interesting appearance."—*Ibid.* p. 179. His only note is a single chirp, not louder than that of a small cricket or grasshopper.

[87] Page 100.—*And other larger birds with orange cheeks,*
A many-colour-painted chattering crowd,
Prattling for ever with their curved beaks,
And through the silent woods screaming aloud.

The Carolina Parrot. Out of 168 kinds of parrots enumerated by Europeans, this is the only species which may be considered a native of the territory of the United States.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 387.

[88] Page 101.—*There was the meadow-lark, with voice as sweet,*
But robed in richer raiment than our own.

The Meadow-lark, though inferior in song to his European namesake, is superior to him in the richness of his plumage.—*Wilson and Bonaparte*, vol. i. p. 318.

[89] Page 101.—*And as the moon smiled on his green retreat,*
The painted nightingale sang out alone.

The Cardinal Grosbeak, or Red Bird, sometimes called the Virginian Nightingale.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 191.

[90] Page 101.—*Words cannot echo music's winged note,*
One bird alone exhausts their utmost power;
'Tis that strange bird whose many-voicéd throat,
Mocks all his brethren of the woodland bower—
To whom indeed the gift of tongues is given,
The musical rich tongues that fill the grove,
Now like the lark dropping his notes from heaven,
Now cooing the soft earth-notes of the dove.

The Mocking Bird (*Turdus Polyglottus*). His voice is full, strong, and musical, and capable of almost every modulation, from the clear, mellow tones of the wood-thrush to the savage scream of the eagle.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 168. So perfect are his imitations, that he many times deceives the sportsman, and sends him in search of birds that are not within miles of him, but whose notes he exactly imitates. Even birds themselves are often imposed on by this admirable mimic, and are decoyed by the fanciful calls of their mates, or dive with precipitation into the depths of thickets, at the scream of what they suppose to be the sparrow-hawk.—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 169.

[91] Page 101.—*Oft have I seen him, scorning all control,*
Winging his arrowy flight rapid and strong,
As if in search of his evanished soul,
Lost in the gushing ecstacy of song.

His expanded wings and tail glistening with white, and the buoyant gaiety of his action, arrest the eye, and his song most irresistibly does the ear, as he

sweeps round with enthusiastic ecstacy. He mounts and descends as his song swells or dies away; and as Mr. Bartram has beautifuliy expressed it, "He bounds aloft with the celerity of an arrow, as if to recover or recall his very soul, expired in the last elevated strain."—Vol. i. p. 169.

[92] Page 102.—*Was it a revelation or a dream?—*

That these bright birds as angels once did dwell
In Heaven with starry Lucifer supreme,
Half sinned with him, and with him partly fell;
That in this lesser paradise they stray,
Float through its air, and glide its streams along,
And that the strains they sing each happy day
Rise up to God like morn aud even song.

"Soon after, as God would, they saw a fair island, full of flowers, herbs, and trees, whereof they thanked God of his good grace; and anon they went on land, and when they had gone long in this, they found a full fayre well, and thereby stood a fair tree full of boughs, and on every bough sat a fayre bird, and they sat so thick on the tree, that uneath any leaf of the tree might be seen. The number of them was so great, and they sung so merrilie, that it was an heavenlike noise to hear. Whereupon S. Brandon kneeled down on his knees and wept for joy, and made his praises devoutlie to our Lord God, to know what these birds meant. And then anon one of the birds flew from the tree to S. Brandon, and he with the flickering of his wings made a full merrie noise like a fiddle, that him seemed he never heard so joyful a melodie. And then S. Brandon commanded the foule to tell him the cause why they sat so thick on the tree and sang so merrilie. And then the foule said, sometime we were angels in heaven, but when our master, Lucifer, fell down into hell for his high pride, and we fell with him for our offences, some higher and some lower, after the quality of the trespass. And because our trespasse is but little, therefore our Lord hath sent us here, out of all paine, in full great joy and mirthe, after his pleasing, here to serve him on this tree in the best manner we can. The Sundaie is a daie of rest from all worldly occupation, and therefore that daie all we be made as white as any snow, for to praise our Lorde in the best wise we may. And then all the birds began to sing even song so merilie, that it was an heavenlie noise to hear; and after supper Saint Brandon and his fellows

went to bed and slept well. And in the morn they arose by times, and then these foules began mattyns, prime, and hours, and all such service as Christian men used to sing; and St. Brandon, with his fellows, abode there seven weeks, until Trinity Sunday was passed."—*The "Lyfe of Saynt Brandon" in the Golden Legend.* Published by Wynkyn de Worde. 1483. Fol. 357.

[93] Page 103.—*The Promised Land.*

The earlier stanzas of this decription of Paradise are principally founded upon the Anglo-Saxon version of the Latin poem, "*De Phenice*," ascribed to Lactantius, a literal translation of which is given in Wright's Essay on "St. Patrick's Purgatory," p. 186. "This poem," says Mr. Wright, "is as old as the earlier part of the eleventh century, and probably more ancient."

[94] Page 104.—*Flowers grow thicker in the fields than grass.*

"Nullam herbam vidimus sine floribus et arborem nullam sine fructibus; et lapides illius pretiosæ gemmæ sunt."—*Colgan's Acta Sanctorum*, p. 721.

[95] Page 105.—*Here might Iduna in her fond pursuit,*
As fabled by the northern sea-born men,
Gather her golden and immortal fruit,
That brings their youth back to the gods again.

In the Scandinavian mythology Bragi presided over eloquence and poetry. His wife, named Iduna, had the care of certain apples, which the gods tasted when they found themselves grow old, and which had the power of instantly restoring them to youth.—*Mallet's Northern Antiquities*, p. 95.

[96] Page 108.—*The fragrant perfume of that heavenly land*
Clings to the very garments that we wear.

"Nonne cognoscitis in odore vestimentorum nostrorum, quod in Paradiso Domini fuimus?"—*Colgan, Acta Sanctorum*, p. 722.

[97] Page 111.—Sind sie Alle aus Licht gebracht.

"From the damp rooms of mean houses, from the bondage of mechanical drudgery, from the confinement of gables and roofs, from the stifling narrow-

ness of streets, from the venerable gloom of churches, are they all raised up to the open light of day."—*Hayward's Translation of Faust*, p. 29.

[98] Page 117.—*Cythna, Genevieve, and Nea.*

Characters in Shelley, Coleridge, and Moore,

[99] Page 117.—"*The Eternal Pilgrim's*" *dream.*

Byron.

"The Pilgrim of Eternity, whose fame
Over his living head, like Heaven, is bent,
An early, but enduring monument."—
Shelley's Adonais.

[100] Page 132.—*Spring*, "*the maiden from afar.*"

Das Mädchen aus der Fremde.
Schiller.

[101] Page 135.—*The foot of the fairy, though lightsome and airy,*
Can stamp on the hard rock the shape it doth wear,
Art cannot trace it nor ages efface it,
And such are thy glances, sweet Kate of Kenmare!

In the vicinity of Kenmare is a Rock called *the fairy rock*, on which the marks of several feet are deeply impressed; they are, of course, supposed to have been the work of fairies. The river Roughty, properly Ruachtach, mentioned in this ballad, discharges itself at the head of the great river or bay of Kenmare.

[102] Page 136.—*In lonely Lough Quinlan in summer's soft hours,*
Fair islands are floating that move with the tide,
Which, sterile at first, are soon covered with flowers,
And thus o'er the bright waters fairy-like glide.

Dr. Smith, in his History of Kerry, says: "Near this place is a considerable fresh water lake, called Lough Quinlan, in which are some small floating islands much admired by the country people. These islands swim from side to side of the lake, and are usually composed at first of a long kind of grass which

being blown off the adjacent grounds about the middle of September, and floating about, collect slime and other stuff, and so yearly increase till they come to have grass and other vegetables grown upon them."

[103] Page 139.—*The Vale of Shangánah.*

By the "Vale of Shangánah" I understand the entire of that beautiful panorama which stretches out from the foot of Kilkenny Hill to Bray Head, and from the White Strand to the Sugar Loaf Mountains. These picturesque hills were called in Irish "The Golden Spears." *Ben Hader* is the original name of the Hill of Howth.

[104] Page 152.—*Those leafy woods and those valleys green.*

With one or two exceptions, this is the only very early poem of mine, of which I have retained either the recollection or a copy. It was published some years ago in the *Dublin Evening Packet*, a journal to which I feel deeply indebted for many acts of literary courtesy and kindness.

[105] Page 154.—*The Clan of Mac Caura.*

Mac Carthy.—Mac Cartha (the correct way of spelling the name in Roman characters) is pronounced in Irish Mac Caura, the *th*, or dotted ċ, having, in that language, the soft sound of *h*.

[106] Page 155.—*Ere Venice had wedded the sea, or enrolled*
The name of a Doge in her proud "Book of Gold."

Montmorency and *Medina* are respectively at the head of the French and Spanish nobility. The first Doge elected in Venice in 709. Voltaire considered the families whose names were inscribed in *The Book of Gold* at the founding of the city as entitled to the first place in European nobility —*Burke's Commoners.*

[107] Page 155.—*Proud should thy heart beat, descendant of Heber.*

The Mac Carthys trace their origin to Heber Fionn, the eldest son of Milesius, King of Spain, through Oilioll Olium, King of Munster, in the third century.—*Shrines of the Guebre*—The Round Towers.

[108] Page 155.—*Better than spells are the axe and the arrow,*
When wielded or flung by the hand of Mac Caura.

Heremon and Ir were also the sons of Milesius. The people who were in possession of the country when the Milesians invaded it were the Tuatha de Danaans, "so called," says Keating, "from their skill in necromancy, of whom some were so famous as to be called gods."

[109] Page 156.—*The house of Miodchuart.*

The house of Miodchuart was an apartment in the palace of Tara. where the provincial kings met for the despatch of public business at the Fes, or parliament of Tara, which assembled there once in every three years; the ceremony alluded to is described in detail by Keating. See Petrie's *Tara.*

[110] Page 156.—*To the halls of the Red Branch, when conquest was o'er,*
The champions their rich spoil of victory bore.

The house of the Red Branch was situated in the stately palace of Eamhain (or Emania), in Ulster. Here the spoils taken from the foreign foe were hung up, and the chieftains who won them were called Knights of the Red Branch.

[111] Page 156.—*There Dathy and Niall bore trophies of war,*
From the peaks of the Alps and the waves of the Loire.

Dathy was killed at the foot of the Alps, by lightning, and Niall (his uncle and predecessor) by an arrow fired from the opposite side of the river, by one of his own generals, as he sat in his tent on the banks of the Loire, in France.

[112] Page 157.—*Base Diarmid Mac Caura.*

Diarmid Mac Carthy, King of Desmond, and Daniel O'Brien, King of Thomond, were the first of the Irish princes to swear fealty to Henry the Second.

[113, 114] Pages 157, 158.—*Arigideen—Allo.*

The *Arigideen* means the little silver stream, and *Allo* the echoing river. By these rivers and many others in the South of Ireland, castles were erected and monasteries founded by the Mac Carthys.

[115] Page 167.—*National Poems and Songs.*

All the poems contained in this division appeared in the *Nation* newspaper according to their respective dates.

[116] Page 169.—*And thou remain a darksome Ajalon.*

"Move not, O Sun, towards Gabaon, nor thou, O Moon, toward the Valley of Ajalon."—*Josue*, ix. 12.

[117] Page 170.—"*Advance three steps, the glorious work is done.*"

"Trois pas en avant, c'est fait."—*Victor Hugo.*

[118] Page 183.—"*Cease to do evil—learn to do well.*"

The admonition, "CEASE TO DO EVIL, LEARN TO DO WELL," is cut in deep letters on the front of the Richmond Penitentiary, South Circular-road, Dublin, the prison in which O'Connell and the other political prisoners were confined in the year 1844.

[119] Page 189.—*A free and a Living Land.*

This poem was written a few months after the death of Thomas Davis, when the first outburst of grief for his premature and unexpected loss had commenced a little to subside. In the sixth line, by an error which I did not perceive until too late, *your* has been printed instead of *our*.

[120] Page 195.—*Their mission is fulfilled, and they creep into their graves.*

Then the Muftis all proclaim,
"God is Great," and name the name,
Of the Prophet, as all Mussulmans must do.
"By Allah! we confess
We are puzzled, and can't guess
Why these people such insanity pursue.
If they wish to live, 'tis plain
They must eat their toil-earned grain,
Their cattle and their corn, their poultry, and their swine;
And, instead of sending rents,
Let them send their compliments
To the absentees abroad, and ask them home to dine!"

[121] Page 195.—*God bless the Turk.*

This poem was written on the first intelligence reaching this country of the difference between Russia and Turkey, on the subject of the Hungarian and Polish refugees, when a European war seemed imminent.

[122] Page 195.—" *Whoever believes in God and the day of resurrection must respect his guest.*

Lane's Arabian Nights, vol. i. p. 27.

[123] Page 201.—*Let us make the sad confession,*
And the bitter fruit bewail,
It was partly indiscretion,
Partly caution, made us fail.

The failure of those expectations which the strength, enthusiasm, and intellectual propagandism of the national party in Ireland some few years ago, had led even the coldest among us to form, is here alluded to.

[124] Page 202.—*The Prince of all the Minstrels lies.*

This allusion to Thomas Moore was written under an impression, very general in Ireland, that the health of our illustrious countryman and greatest poet had become seriously affected. It has given me, as I am sure it has given thousands, heartfelt pleasure to learn, from a recent statement in the newspapers, that he is in the enjoyment of good health, physically and mentally. Long may he continue so!

[125] Page 208.—" *The Painter of the Year.*"

In the Persian tales of Inatulla, the sun is called " The Painter of the Year."

[126] Page 210.—*The same as when in Eden's bowers it grew.*

The Plantain Tree. Gerard calls this plant " Adam's apple-tree," from a notion that it was the forbidden fruit of Eden. Others suppose it to have been the grape brought out of the promised land to Moses.—*Loudon's Encyclopædia of Gardening.*

[127] Page 210.—"*The tulip of a hundred leaves.*"

"In the skirts of these mountains the ground is richly diversified with various kinds of tulips. I directed them to be counted, and they brought in thirty-two or thirty-three different sorts of tulips. There is one species which has a scent in some degree like a rose, and which I termed *lale-gul-bui* (the rose-scented tulip. There is also the hundred-leaved tulip (this is supposed to be the double poppy)."—*Memoirs of the Emperor Baber*, p. 146.

[128] Page 211.—*Oh! if 'twere true, as Eastern fables tell.*

It is a popular belief that when the Devil was cast out of heaven he fell in Cabul.—*Lieut. Burnes.*

[129] Page 212.—"*Burners of the world.*"

Jehanzos, the burner or desolator of the world. He is said to have got that name from his horrible massacre at Ghuzni.

[130] Page 212.—*A shower of blood upon the rifled leaves.*

The showers of blood which caused so much terror formerly were caused by the excrements of insects. Sleidan relates that, "In the year 1553, a vast multitude of butterflies swarmed through a great part of Germany, and sprinkled plants, leaves, buildings, clothes, and men, with bloody drops, as if it had rained blood."—*Kirby and Spence's Introduction to Entomology.*

[131] Page 212.—*The famed Chameleon Bird.*

"In these mountains (N. E. of Cabul) is found the bird *Lokeh*, which is also termed *Bukelemun*, or *Chameleon bird*, and which has, between its head and its tail, five or six different colours, like the neck of a dove. The people of the country relate a singular circumstance concerning it. In the winter season these birds come down to the skirts of the hills, and if, in their flight, they happen to pass over a vineyard, they are no longer able to fly, and are caught."—*Baber*, p. 145.

[132] Page 213.—*Yes, Baber.*

The Emperor Baber. "We delight to see him describe his success in rearing a new plant, in introducing a new fruit-tree, or in repairing a decayed aque-

duct, with the same pride and complacency that he relates the most splendid victories. He had cultivated the art of poetry from his early years, and his Diwan of Turki poems is mentioned as giving him a high rank among the poets of his country. He was skilful in the science of music, on which he wrote a treatise." The translator of his "Memoirs" (written by himself), concludes his character of Baber in these words: "In activity of mind, in the gay equanimity and unbroken spirit with which he bore the extremes of good or bad fortune, in the possession of the manly and social virtues, so seldom the portion of princes, in his love of letters, and his successful cultivation of them, we shall probably find no other Asiatic prince who can fairly be placed beside him."—*Memoirs of the Emperor Baber*, p. 431.

[133] Page 213.—*To that small marble mosque of Shah Jehan.*

The tomb of the Emperor Baber is situated about a mile from the city of Cabul, in the sweetest spot of the neighbourhood. He had directed his body to be interred in this place, to him the choicest in his dominions. These are his own words regarding Cabul: "The climate is extremely delightful, and there is no such place in the known world." The grave is marked by two erect slabs of white marble. Many of his wives and children have been interred around him. A running clear stream yet waters the fragrant flowers of this cemetery, which is the great holiday resort of the people of Cabul. In front of the grave there is a small but chaste mosque of white marble, built in the year 1640, by order of the Emperor *Shah Jehan*, "that poor Mohamedans might here offer up their prayers."—*Burnes.*

[134] Page 213.—*The Huma.*

"*The Huma* is a bird much celebrated in Oriental poetry; it never alights on the ground; and it is believed that every head which it overshadows will one day wear a crown."—*Notes to Baber*, 5, 15.

[135] Page 213.—*To turn aside the clouds and winds of heaven.*

The monsoon is earlier in the south of India, and in the vicinity of the ocean, than in the north, and the rains are heavier. The mountains in the interior either arrest entirely the progress of the clouds, or vary their direction, and hence large tracts of country are exempted from, or only partially experience, the influence of the monsoons."—*Encl. Brit.*, art., "*Afghanistan.*"

[136] Page 214.—*Like Bamean's monstrous deity be known.*

The excavated city of Bamean. The gigantic idols of Bamean are cut in alto-relievo on the face of the hill, one about 120 feet high.—*Burnes.*

[137] Page 214.—*Through the fair city where Ferdusi sang.*

Ghuzni, the most celebrated of the cities of Cabul, where Mahmoud reigned and Ferdusi sang.

[138] Page 214.—*The dazzling portals of some idol's shrine.*

The sandal-wood gates at the shrine of the Emperor Mahmoud were brought, 800 years ago, from Sommat in India, where Mahmoud smote the idol, and the precious stones fell from his body.—*Burnes.* In the capture and destruction of Ghuzni in 1842, these celebrated gates were carried off in triumph by the British forces.

[139] Page 215.—*The Khoord Cabul.*

The scene of Akhbar Khan's treachery, and the destruction of 1600 British soldiers, in the disastrous retreat from Cabul to Jellalabad, on the 6th of January, 1842.

[140] Page 215.—*Like those fragrant navies of the Nile, &c.*

The floating bee-houses of the Nile. "In Lower Egypt, where the flower harvest is not so early by several weeks as in the upper district of that country, the practice of transportation is carried on to a considerable extent. About the end of October the hives, after being collected together from the different villages, and conveyed up the Nile, marked and numbered by the individuals to whom they belong, are heaped pyramidically upon the boats prepared to receive them, which floating gradually down the river, and stopping at certain stages of their passage, remain there a longer or shorter time, according to the produce which is afforded by the surrounding country. After travelling three months in this manner, the bees having culled the perfumes of the orange flowers of the Said, the essence of the roses of the Faicum, the treasures of the Arabian jessamine, and a variety of flowers, are brought back, about the beginning of February, to the places from which they have been carried. The productiveness of

the flowers, at each respective stage, is ascertained by the gradual descent of the boats in the water, and which is probably noted by a scale of measurement. This industry produces for the Egyptians delicious honey, and abundance of bees'-wax."—*Dr. Bevan*, p. 233, quoted in an article in the Quarterly Review.

[141] Page 217.—*Ethna, I wrong thee, dearest, for thy name is Truth.*

Ethna or Aithna, in Irish, signifies Truth. The mother of Columbkille was called by this beautiful name.

[142] Page 222.—*Marino's woods and Moynealta's shore.*

One of the ancient names of Clontarf was Moynealta.

[143] Page 223.—*The brown slopes of lofty Bennadair.*

The Hill of Howth. There seems to be some doubt as to the meaning of this word. D'Alton, in his History of the County of Dublin, says, "it was anciently called *Ben-na-dair*, as it is supposed from the quantity of venerable oaks that then waved o'er its fertile declivities;"—while Moore, in his History of Ireland, vol. ii. p. 105, spells it *Benadar*, and explains it "the mountain of birds." *Ben Háder*, however, is the more correct way of spelling and pronouncing the name.

[144] Page 224.—*The samphire gatherer on each mossy glade,*
Here may pursue his wild and "dreadful trade."

On the sides of the hill grows *the samphire* celebrated by Shakspeare:

"Half way down
Hangs one that gathers samphire,—dreadful trade."

LEAR, *Act* IV. *Sc.* 6.

[145] Page 224.—*Edria's Isle.*

Ireland's Eye.

[146] Page 224.—*Three Sisters.*

The three hills, of which Killiney forms the centre, that so beautifully terminate the southern shore of the Bay of Dublin, have been called "The Three Sisters," from the extraordinary resemblance they bear to each other.

[147] Page 249.—*Julia, Clarissa, and Clementina.*

An allusion to the Heloise of Rousseau, and to the Clarissa Harlowe and Sir Charles Grandison of Richardson.

[148] Page 250.—*The Young Captive.*

"André Chénier, a Roman soul, of loftiest imagination, whose courageous patriotism had withdrawn him from poetry to throw him into politics, had been imprisoned as a Girondist.

"The dreams of his splendid imagination had found their realization in Mademoiselle de Coigny, who was incarcerated in the same prison (Saint Lazare).

"André Chénier rendered to this young captive an adoration of enthusiasm and respect, endeared still more by the sinister shade of precocious death, which already covered these dwellings. He addressed to her his immortal verses, *La Jeune Captive*, the most melodious sigh that ever issued from the apertures of a dungeon."—LAMARTINE, *History of the Girondists*, vol. iii. p. 418.

[149] Page 289.—*Romance of Maleca.*

The original of this romance is to be found in the *Guerras Civiles de Granada*," by Gines Peres de Hyta, p. 399, Paris edition. Calderon's beautiful play, "*Amar despues de la Muerte*," is partly founded on the same story. In the Dublin University Magazine for November, 1848, I have given a full analysis of this play, with a translation of all those scenes in which the story of Maleca is detailed. This romance also appeared in the same article.

[150] Page 291.—*Like a lily in a garland twined of dusky autumn flowers,*
Like a silver beech-tree shining in the midst of gnarled bowers,
Like the young moon's pearly crescent, seen beside a rain-filled cloud,
Thus the fair, the dead Maleca lay amid the swarthy crowd.

This stanza, for which there is no foundation in the original Spanish, I have taken the liberty of introducing here.

[151] Page 293.—*Not more active in the Zambras,*
Than on horseback in the battle.

The Zambra was a Moorish festival, accompanied with music and dancing.

[152] Page 293.—*If, as in the sunny pastime,*
Where so well the canes thou throwest.

"The game of canes" was a great favourite with the Moors in Spain. It was in some respects a sort of bloodless tournament, in which canes were used instead of lances.

[153] Page 300.—*Promises, when love expireth,*
Vanish as if writ in water.

"*Como escritas en el agua.*" This will remind the reader of poor Keats' inscription for his own tomb: "Here lies one whose name was writ in water."

THE END.

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